

# DIVERSITYWORKS

JANUARY 2015 VOLUME 5 ISSUE 1

*"For All of Us"*



DEANDRE STALLWORTH



ELAINE SEALEY



DR. JENNIFER M. EVANS



DR. DAN STRICKLAND

**JAMES KNOWS**  
HOW TO ADVISE WOMEN

**PASSIONATE &  
PROFESSIONAL**

**SEALEY CLIMBS**  
RANKS RAPIDLY

**EVANS PRESSES FOR TOP**  
PATIENT SATISFACTION

**VILLAGE ON TASK**  
REARING YOUTH



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## FEATURED ARTICLES

19



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City of Lake City  
Mayor Lovith Anderson

## 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

Since we believe that every outgoing year should be retired with grateful humility and each new one welcomed with explosive expectations, we have endeavored to deliver the most compelling edition to mark this milestone and create the bridge across into the next. Oh yes, this page turner edition features the same categories but the individual stories are popping and rocking like a real New Year's party should be!

Take, for instance, getting to know a courageous sister who chose to remove both her breasts in the prime of her life, identifying ebola virus warriors or members of the sandwich generation (bet you know some), or learning how to build capacity throughout our communities and how our leadership figures are beginning to agree on what's needed to fast forward regional economic development. Others may appreciate today's civil/human/women's rights activists (respectively)-- Dr. Lonnie Randolph, Jr., Mary Demetrious and Mary Wood Beasley-- who share their approach to world peace; artists like Valerie Hines and Marty Gamble, authors like Altonya Washington, business wizards like Elaine Sealey and educators like Dr. Zenobia Edwards and Dr. Bhuvana Parameswaran who have made their mark yet still add value to society. Then there are organizations like United Way, Council on Governments and Young Professionals and institutions like the Florence Museum and the local Greek Orthodox Church that make life richer for us all.

Business still booms in the area as reported by GE Healthcare's Environmental Health and Safety Manager DeAndre Stallworth; the City of Florence, which has acquired a new municipal judge in Linward C. Edwards and whose municipality is compared favorably to similar downtown renewal projects; the City of Lake City which is labeled a "go to" destination by CNN; community staple Jebaily Law Firm and partnering corporations that support UNCF. Strong tips have come for companies and individuals which want to reinvent themselves or expand {careers} through continuing education, all of which begin with positive thinking.

Movers and shakers in this quarter begin with our cover story about McDonald's franchisee Wanda D. James on her daily *modus operandi* and continue with the innovators at Elliott Fight Dynamics, plus the creative, committed mindset of Dr. John Keith and though everyone contained herein is special, we do have a section that lifts up the awareness that African-American studies are getting their just due at Universities across the land as told by USC's Dr. Todd Shaw and Indiana University's Dr. Tyron Cooper as well as Heisman Trophy Winner George Rogers who tells his way of giving back and Major League Baseball's Orlando Hudson who raises monies to fight autism.

Florence Career Center has cemented its partnership with big business and has increased job readiness for its students by implementing a new HVAC program while Coker College's Kristen Oliver has answered the call to the wild; FMU's Hill-Chapman has attained national certification in psychology; Marion's School District caters to every students' needs through community; Inspire Us announces scholarships; and a regional math tourney shows off this area's brightest and best.

Our health shall never suffer if we educate ourselves about the resources at Eastern Carolina Medicine, which has just been joined by Jennifer M. Evans, DC, or at the award-winning Carolinas Hospital Systems and its affiliate Dr. Roberto Miranda; the new health care option for senior adults at Healthy Connections Prime; the philanthropic level of Hope Health

services or new remedies for rheumatoid arthritis available at Gittens Chiropractic.

With the ample holiday down time, making good use of the season's offerings will be anything but empty. Starting the day with a cup of Organo Gold, followed by a day trip or taking in a movie featuring percussionist Lacy Marie Muldrow or appreciating shows at the Performing Arts Center or Florence Little Theatre... will be sure to keep spirits uplifted until it's time to return to the routine work schedule in January.



Rennie Lunn-McAllister  
Executive Editor

Happy New Year!!!



## LOCAL CORPORATIONS EARN BY GIVING

*Submitted by Tonita Perry APR Principal/Public Relations Strategist at Eaddy Perry & Associates, Inc.*



When we think of corporate social responsibility we often think of it as being the sustainability of a corporation. Sustainability often looked at as operating to provide a profit, while providing a reasonable return on investments to stockholders. But, what about making sure stockholder commitments coincide with social accountability?

To local corporations Roche Carolina, Inc., Santee Electric Cooperative, Inc., Duke Energy, and Sonoco being good community partners is what helps them sustain growth in this economy. As corporate partners, they are committed to a diverse, well trained workforce that actively participates in public interests that affect the company, its industry, and its local communities. This can be seen through their support of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), with Sonoco being the largest corporate donor in the Pee Dee area.

According to Roger Schrum, Sonoco vice president and chair of the Sonoco Foundation and Sustainability Council, "Sonoco is a strong believer in 'Community Collaboration' which we describe as a process of shared decision making in which all stakeholders come together to explore their differences and develop a joint strategy for action. Our overarching goal is to join forces to advance the needs of the entire diverse community. Like UNCF, we don't want to act alone. When the right people are brought together in constructive ways with the appropriate information, they are able to create powerful visions for the future and robust strategies for positive change. Community Collaboration is an accelerator. It leads to systemic changes. It unifies and defines

the spirit of a community and, most importantly, it improves people's lives, whether through better education, empowerment, increased opportunities, attracting business or retaining talent." UNCF is the nation's largest and most effective minority education organization. For the last 70 years, UNCF serves thousands of students, communities, and the nation by helping African Americans and other underserved students of color go to and through college so they can compete for the best jobs in the 21st century global economy.

Supporting UNCF has proven to be an effective return on investments. Through the financial support that UNCF receives from its corporate partners, it is able to support the academic needs of a variety of young people successfully achieving their academic goals and thus developing a diverse pool of qualified, educated candidates for the local workplace.

"Diversity and inclusion are core to who we are as a company. The students and schools that UNCF supports reflect Roche's commitment to diversity and inclusion," said President and Site Head of Roche Carolina, Inc. Jami DeBrango-Palumbo. "A diverse workforce provides inspiration, innovation, new ideas and a better understanding of patient needs. An inclusive environment, in which employees feel valued and respected, enables these differing views to be exchanged openly and is key for driving innovation and unlocking the full potential of our employees, so we can do know what patients need next."

Mindy Taylor, government & community relations manager for Duke Energy said, "Charitable giving and volunteerism are an integral part of Duke Energy's commitment to the communities we serve. Strong, vibrant communities do not happen by accident. They are the result of hard work, significant investments of time and key partnerships to solve daunting challenges. We believe a solid commitment to diversity and inclusion makes us a better company, a better

competitor and a better corporate citizen. Annually, the Duke Energy Foundation funds more than \$25 million in charitable grants across our service areas."

Made up of Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Horry, Marion, Marlboro, and Williamsburg counties, with Lee and Sumter counties being added this year, the Pee Dee Area UNCF Leadership Council is comprised of leaders within these counties that support the work of raising funds through corporate and small business support and employee and individual contributions, as well as the always anticipated Annual UNCF "A Mind Is" gala. This year's gala, which took place on Friday, Dec. 5, at the Florence Civic Center in Florence, S.C., feature celebrity guest Tyler Perry's "The Haves and The Have Nots" co-star, actress Angela Robinson, who portrays the devious character Veronica Harrington. Funds that the Pee Dee Area UNCF Leadership Council raises within the local community are invested in supporting students within the local community.

"As an electric cooperative and a member of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Santee Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SEC) operates under seven core cooperative principles. One of these cooperative principles is Concern For Community. Support of UNCF and other community programs helps educate our members and gives us all a better quality of life," said Adrel S. Langley, manager of community relations at Santee Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Through this annual campaign the Pee Dee Area UNCF Leadership Council supports more than 8,000 current students attending the five South Carolina UNCF-member institutions – Allen University, Benedict College, Claflin University, Morris College, and Voorhees College, and the last academic year, through scholarships and other means of financial assistance, directly supported 130 young people from across South Carolina, attending a diverse array of colleges and universities.



# DOWNTOWN RENEWAL EVEN MORE PROMISING NOW

by Les Echols



As Founder and Principal of APD Urban Planning and Management, LLC, and with more than 30 years of community development experience, Jesse Wiles has seen his fair share of urban planning change neighborhoods and communities for the better. His urban planning firm works with local governments,

assisting them in creating comprehensive planning processes that revitalize urban neighborhoods. Within the City of Florence, APD has worked closely with City staff and neighborhood residents for more than two years on a neighborhood revitalization plan that has excited many in the community, anxious for neighborhood redevelopment.

Since February 2012, APD has extensively researched the East Florence, North Florence and Northwest Florence communities to determine existing conditions, and the socio-economic composition of each area. In so doing, the firm reviewed trends and factors that could impede desired growth and development. APD's in-depth analysis found an abundance of single-family detached properties that have transitioned from being owner occupied properties to being rental properties at a level that is twice as high as the rest of the City, and Florence County as a whole. Careful evaluation of the properties showed that a significant number of single-family detached structures (roughly 25%), range in scale from fair to dilapidated condition. Furthermore, there is an inadequate supply of housing to meet the demand for moderate to middle income homebuyers desiring residential properties. The ability of these communities to thrive is severely impeded by these aforementioned factors, which is where the next steps come in. Armed with the detailed neighborhood analysis and market findings, APD, with the support of City of Florence staff and

Florence City Council, developed a range of strategies designed to first stabilize, and then revitalize each of the neighborhoods. These strategies will ultimately result in retaining existing residents while attracting new residents to the East, North and Northwest Florence communities. According to Mr. Wiles, public sector intervention is needed in order to restore private sector confidence and the trust of people who live in these areas. That is why the City of Florence becomes a key player in this revitalization and development process. "We needed to figure out where we could demonstrate how this intervention would work geographically in the shortest period of time. Ideally the process will be catalytic in nature, in other words, local government, private sector and residents can clearly see that redevelopment that happens in these targeted areas and realize that it can be duplicated to create additional development projects," Wiles explained.

Mr. Wiles further stated that Florence compared "favorably" to other similar projects, based on the trends and characteristics of the area. He described the City Council and City staff as "incredible" and "supportive" in its ability to move this extensive effort forward. Mr. Wiles holds an undergraduate degree in Urban Affairs from the University of Cincinnati, a graduate degrees in Public Administration and Urban Planning. He established APD in 1990.



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## LAW FIRM A STAPLE IN COMMUNITY

*Submitted by Amy B. Gaines, Office Manager*



*Ronald (left) and George Jebaily*

Caring about people and the varied legal issues they face has been the primary focus of the Jebaily Law Firm since its establishment more than forty years ago. The firm began in 1969 as the Law Office of Ronald J. Jebaily with a continuing mission to "... provide competent and effective legal representation to the people of the Pee Dee while caring for them as unique and valuable human beings." The firm handles cases in personal injury law, workers' compensation, social security disability, family law, probate and criminal defense.

Ronald J. Jebaily was born and reared in Brooklyn, New York. In 1963, his parents, John and Sylvia, were transferred to Florence with the Wentworth Manufacturing Company. Ron moved to Florence in 1966 after obtaining his undergraduate degree from St. John's University.

Ron attended the University of South Carolina Law School, graduating in 1969 and passing the bar shortly thereafter.

In 1975, Steven M. Glass joined the firm and the firm name was changed to Jebaily and Glass. In 1976, Ron purchased the property on the corner of Coit and Evans Streets, an abandoned Esso station, with the intention of establishing his firm as a downtown presence. It is strategically located a block from the Florence County Courthouse and a block from the Federal Courthouse. The firm remains at the same location. In 1984, George Jebaily joined the firm as a partner, and nine years later, Tim Meacham did, becoming a partner in 1999. At that time, the law firm name changed again to Jebaily, Glass & Meacham. Later that year, Glass retired, and in 2003, Meacham retired. Today, it is known as Jebaily Law Firm.

Attorneys currently at the firm are Ronald J. Jebaily, primarily focusing on Workers Compensation, George D. Jebaily, a Personal Injury attorney; Rangeley C. Bailey, a Personal Injury and Social Security Disability attorney; Cely Anne Baker Brigman, Family and Probate law; Suzanne H. Jebaily, who is responsible for Workers' Compensation and Appellate Advocacy; and Brian S. Yost, the newest addition to the firm, focusing his practice on personal injury cases and criminal defense.

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### ATTORNEYS:

**Ronald J. Jebaily • George D. Jebaily • Cely Anne B. Brigman  
Rangeley C. Bailey • Suzanne H. Jebaily • Brian S. Yost**





## SHAW REINVENTS HERSELF

Submitted by Bridgette P. Coates, Workforce Program Developer



Susan Shaw, RN

Meet Susan Shaw- a happy, vibrant, recent college graduate and Registered Nurse from Scranton, SC. She has been employed with Fresenius Medical Care in Johnsonville, since July 2014 after receiving her Associate's Degree in Applied Science-Nursing, from Florence-Darlington Technical College in May, 2014. But Susan's story is unique and encouraging because at the age of 49 and

after a 25-year career in the commercial printing business she made the decision to go to college and pursue a new career!

At age 16 in her junior year of high school, Shaw became a mother and dropped out of school. She worked hard to receive her GED and then began a career in commercial printing which gave her a marketable skill and meaningful employment for twenty-five years. Fast forward to 2010 and technology that allows individuals with good personal equipment to print without relying on printing companies, she found herself a "layoff" statistic, unemployed, receiving Unemployment Insurance, skilled in an occupation to which she could most likely not return to work and working in a part-time custodial position at her church.

This is when she learns about the Workforce Investment Act program, a federally -funded program that provides individuals with access to services and training that helps them prepare for work and helps businesses meet their need for skilled workers. At the SC Works Florence Center, Susan meets WIA career specialists who assess her needs and capabilities and encourage her to pursue a new career. Susan says that she followed in her daughter's footsteps whom had graduated from college and become a nurse eight years prior! Susan refers to her WIA career specialists, Rita Brantley and Erin Strickland, as her heroes! They encouraged her and helped her every step of the way. It had been 33 years since she had been in school and returning to school was terrifying and required hours and hours of study! Indeed, she was the oldest adult in her classes and in most cases she was older than her teachers! But everyone, including her teachers, was very supportive. Susan says, "It was the hardest thing that I have ever done. Nothing has been more challenging! But I am so glad that I did it! I have a great deal of pride in my accomplishment. I always considered college students and graduates as members of a club of which I could never be a part! But I did it with the help of family, friends, WIA, UI, and God!"

Susan Shaw's story provides encouragement on many levels- Tomorrow is a new day! Don't let unemployment or layoff from a job discourage you from seeking a new career. Don't let your AGE discourage you from trying new things. At the age of 53, Susan graduated from college and started a brand new career that allows her a salary, hours, benefits and time to pursue other things she enjoys like kayaking and time with her three grandchildren. Shaw says "It is still incredible that those two letters after my name (RN) really belong to me!"

Visit local SC Works Pee Dee Center and find out how the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) can partner to make improvements in life! To find the SC Works Pee Dee Center closest to you and to learn more about services, visit [www.scworkspeedee.com](http://www.scworkspeedee.com), or see the ad in Diversity Works magazine.

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# SMALL TOWN DOING BIG THINGS

by Mallory Brayboy



Mayor Lovith Anderson

**L**AKE CITY -- Once a bustling agricultural town known for its great tobacco production and busy bean market is making a name for itself once again. CNN recently named it the “go to” destination for tourists in South Carolina. With its diverse options for cultural exploration combined with an old southern ambience, no wonder Lake City is the place to be! Mayor Lovith Anderson is proud to be a part of the town’s rich redevelopment. A native of the town, Anderson was introduced to politics at an early age. His father, retired mayor of

Andrews, SC, and his Uncle Lane required Anderson and his brothers to work “at the polls” while other children were playing. Anderson says he grew up with the notion “If you’re not a part of the solution, you’re a part of the problem” and this philosophy has stuck with him.

Recently re-elected, Mayor Anderson is serving his third term of office in Lake City. He receives the ongoing support from the community with much gratification. “It shows that they appreciate what they’ve seen happen in Lake City over the past years”, says Anderson. Many new developments have recently occurred in the city including a façade program began by the Lake City Partnership Council. The program assists merchants and landowners in having their storefronts refurbished free of charge. The storefronts will maintain their “old timey” appearance adding to the distinctiveness of the city. In exchange for this service, merchants must agree to retain the appearance for a certain amount of years. Other recent developments include partnership with the Benefit Bank of South Carolina, a new 57-room boutique hotel on Main Street, the Lake Tran transportation system which provides discounted rates to the elderly and children, and the opening of the Boys and Girls Club. Mayor Anderson says the club has been “a dream for years that has finally come true”. Future additions to the club include a teen center and gymnasium as well as enhancement programs for citizenship and academics.

**C**itizens of Lake City can expect much more in the coming year as well. Plans are on the table to continue adding to the beauty of the town by demolishing or renovating dilapidated housing and introducing a more active litter project. Residents will also be delighted by the enhancement of their lake! The lake will be a part of a new family park being built at the old Public Works location on Church Street. It will stretch to Lion’s Park and Mayor Anderson says residents can expect walking trails, boardwalks, and fishing. Excavation for the five-acre lake will begin in March. As a part of the lake project, Lion’s Park will also be revamped. Improvements in the city’s police and fire departments will be seen this year. The police department will receive new vehicles – two cars and two SUVs – and have other efforts underway to create a more attractive environment for those seeking careers in law enforcement. The town’s fire department, which has responders stationed at all times, has been approved for 2 new fire trucks as well.

Several treasures can be found within the flourishing town. Its Jones-Carter Gallery was the first in state to host the remarkable works of Florence native William H. Johnson and is currently showing The Sum of Mary. Lake City is home of Nan-Ya Plastics which employs thousands and creates world-wide products including threads for under armor worn by NFL players in last year’s SuperBowl. The town also hosts ArtFields, the Southeast’s largest art competition and festival which awards \$100,000 in prizes every year.

Lake City, though small in size is full of promise. They have recently entered into an agreement with its state capitol Columbia. “Their former city manager comes down and works with us on projects. This gives us access to resources that a large city like Columbia has”, Anderson says. He would eventually like to use this partnership as an example to other communities around the state and show them what can happen when we all work together.



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## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES EXPAND CAREER OPTIONS



The business world is constantly changing and growing, becoming more culturally diverse and interconnected than ever before. Companies are looking for employees who are globally minded - even if the company does not do business on an international scale - because chances are it employs and serves a diverse population. Employees who

recognize and understand different business opportunities, cultures and strategies can help a company successfully negotiate diverse situations.

Colleges and universities are recognizing how important it is for students to have a global perspective as part of the degree they earn. More and more, the best universities are choosing to include deep and integrated instruction on global issues. By preparing students to think about their surroundings in the context of international situations, we have found they are better equipped to participate fully in an increasingly complex world in which everything from accounting to human resources is touched by global trends.

If you are thinking about going back to college to earn a degree, or if you are considering a graduate degree to help enhance your career, keep in mind how a globally focused education can help you:

- \* Almost every business has a cultural connection. Even the smallest locally owned and operated companies need to obtain materials to do business, and there is a good chance those materials are not

available in the local community. They might not even be available in the same country. Having employees who understand how to navigate complex negotiations with people who may not share the same cultural values and backgrounds can help the company make great business deals with businesses in all parts of the world.

- \* Employees who are able to adapt quickly and easily to changing business environments can help the business stay current and grow as the economic environment fluctuates. These changes do not necessarily need to be international in nature. They can be caused by social, political and economic trends, and an employee who knows how to adapt is a valuable asset.

- \* Often cultural diversity is present within the workplace, especially as families become more mobile. Employees who have the ability to understand and recognize diversity among coworkers and with business partners may be able to blend better in the work environment. They may also be strong team members who can contribute solutions that encompass a variety of perspectives.

- \* The world is growing smaller as technology becomes more advanced and international dealings become the norm for many businesses. Because of this, companies are setting up partnerships with foreign-established businesses. Employees who have a global cultural awareness may have better success as the international business sector grows.

By creating opportunities to think about diverse cultures, as well as the practices and business environments they sustain. As you look into the degree opportunities available to you, learn whether the degree is taught with a global perspective. It may help you take your career - and the company you are working for - much further.



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# PASSIONATE AND PROFESSIONAL: STALLWORTH GETS JOB DONE

by Les Echols



DeAndre Stallworth

Safety in the workplace is one of the things sometimes taken for granted, but it is a bigger concern when it comes to any type of manufacturing environment. GE Healthcare's new Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Manager DeAndre Stallworth takes his job, and his dedication to health and safety, very seriously.

Stallworth graduated from Iowa State University in 2004 with a B.S degree in Industrial Technology with concentration on Safety and said he actually began his program of study as a computer engineer before switching to industrial technology. "I realized computer engineer wasn't for me because I didn't like being cooped up in a lab. Prior to working for GE, he worked for The Boeing Company in several roles, including Industrial Hygiene/Safety Specialist 2, Industrial Hygiene/Safety Specialist 3 and Health & Safety Program Manager. In 2010, he started his GE career at the GE Aviation in Yakima, WA facility as an EHS Leader in the Actuation COE. In 2012, he relocated to Chicago, IL for GE as the EHS Leader for HCIT Sales & Service.

In an effort to expand his experience and knowledge of the GE organization, Andre accepted the role of EHS Manager for GE Healthcare in Florence, SC in August of 2014. "My duties are to adhere to compliance with OSHA & GE Policies while maintaining a safe working environment" Stallworth says. In his role, he has a multitude of responsibilities that fall under his guidance, major duties to include the overall plant environment and its health and

safety. He stresses the importance of having to be passionate in his field and admonishes "Don't get in this job for accolades. The job is sometimes a thankless job and it requires a lot of mental and physical investment, however the benefits are great. It is important to stay focused and maintain knowledge of current regulations and policies. Oftentimes EHS professionals are viewed as the experts therefore many rely on the accuracy of your word regarding safety issues. Lastly, in all things you do, be sure to maintain professionalism, truthfulness, and integrity."

He is also responsible for managing the environmental permits, radiation licenses, along with the well-being of GE Healthcare employees. To ensure that he has the capacity to fulfill his tedious duties, he has two direct reports that help him with day-to-day tasks.

Stallworth has already endeared himself to the community and the well-being of his fellow employees, using as an example his passion for the GE Health Ahead initiatives, in which GE has healthy items for employees to eat and activities for employees to participate in. "I want to impact the lives of those who are less fortunate and show them that they can make it. Nothing is going to come without work but success is for those who want it most. I enjoy interacting with people and being able to help others achieve their goals. I received a lot of help getting to where I am in my career and my way of giving back is to help other people", he said.

His philosophy on employees and the workplace defines his dedication to a healthy and diverse work environment. "I strive to have all employees come to work and have a productive day. As well as leave the same or better than they came in".



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## EDWARDS IS NEWEST CITY JUDGE

by Alicia C. Phillip



Judge Linward C. Edwards, II, Esq.

By unanimous City Council vote, local attorney Linward C. Edwards, II has become the city's newest municipal judge. He will join Associate Judges Taft Guiles, Rangeley Bailey, Nicholas Lewis, Lloyd Willcox, and Administrative Judge Debra Jackson. Edwards, who will continue to practice law at his thriving personal injury law firm while serving in a part-time capacity, expressed his excitement about the new position:

"I am excited to serve the Florence community in this capacity. I am humbled and grateful for this opportunity granted by the Florence City Council. Florence is growing and changing with the new neighborhood redevelopment project, along with all of the investment in our Downtown area, so I am just excited to help with moving my city and state forward."

Edwards was born and raised in Florence County and graduated from Wilson High School in 1995. He then served his country in The United States Air Force for four years, before returning home and attending Francis Marion University in Florence, South Carolina. Edwards then attended the University of the District of Columbia David A. Clarke School of Law in Washington, D.C. and earned his Juris Doctor in 2010. In April 2012, Edwards opened his law practice, The Law Office of Linward Edwards II, where he continues to represent clients in state and federal court.

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## BUILDING CAPACITY IN COMMUNITIES

Submitted by Tony James, President, Global Trusted Partners, LLC



Anthony R. James

Some of us may recall the baby-boomer generation and the Generation X eras. During these periods, when a young man or woman set out to obtain that first job – that first demonstration of their growing independence – it was a proud moment for them. Their parents, having cultivated this independence, shared the pride. Even younger siblings and other family members were proud of their achievements. Indeed, these

new “soon-to-be” taxpayers had been somewhat groomed and prepared for this moment in the home environment as well as in the schoolhouse since early childhood. During these eras, prospective employers comfortably made their own assumptions when approached by these young men and women. Employers could readily assume that even though many still in their teens – these individuals in all probability already possessed several useful work skills including a basic understanding of the importance of being on time, dependable, well groomed, respectful, honest, and being willing to listen and learn. How did the employer know this? It was because he could literally rely on the fact that these individuals had principals, values, and even ethics embedded in the home environment by thoughtful hard-working parents, even grandparents, and other extended family members. It was an indispensable part of the developmental, teaching, and growth process known aptly as **“home training”**. It was a different time my friends – a very, very different time. Frankly in many cases, much of this learning was rooted in a system of values quite different from those of today. Lest we choose to put our heads in the sand we must acknowledge these shortfalls and courageously make necessary adjustments.

While we don’t dare paint every parent or household with the same broad brush stroke, we must understand however that in our society today – in many households, some “single-parent” households, or homes where both parents must work to make ends meet, etc., this “embedding process” just simply no longer occurs. Let’s not be too uncomfortable to acknowledge it, own it, and most importantly – address it. Having spent many years in the Armed Forces, I can confirm that contrary to what some individuals may believe, young people actually yearn for leadership and will accept more disciplined approaches to solving problems. Many of those who expect leadership but don’t receive it become disenchanted and may tend to behave below par. When this occurs, we should acknowledge we’ve failed to provide the necessary leadership – but still at the end of the day we must intuitively address these issues to continue building capacity throughout our communities.

Many youth today are ill-advised and not mentored or educated sufficiently regarding **character and personal development and personal responsibility**. Nor are they learning other pertinent life skills required today that help insure success in the workforce. In order to mitigate the negative economic impact of this ‘lack of learning’ we must get back to the basics and proper use of progressive, resourceful, and competent methods of preparing our youth for the workplace. These must be well thought out sound methods of engagement and training & development. Capacity building is an extremely important task but not a new concept. Nor does it need to be complicated to the extent that the intent itself gets lost without benefit to those intended to receive it. Capacity building is intended to give those whose lives have been affected by negative circumstances the knowledge, tools and wherewithal to help themselves overcome those circumstances and take pride in their new found ability to improve their lives and familial circumstances and to positively participate in the growth and resurgence of their own communities.



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## FIRST PERSON: CONSENSUS GROWS ABOUT REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Submitted By Norm Steadman, Communications Specialist Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce



Norm Steadman

In the past few months, I have had the distinct privilege of attending a pair of Economic Development meetings in the Pee Dee, both of which highlighted the strengths and needs of our region when it comes to attracting business and generating jobs. Last fall I attended Congressman Tom Rice's Economic Development Symposium, titled 'Why We Located Here', held at Florence-Darlington Technical College's SiMT center. Those who spend time with Congressman Rice know exactly where his focus lies: jobs, jobs, jobs. This passion for improving the employment opportunities in South Carolina was on full display as he welcomed several members of the Pee Dee region's network of employers to speak about why they chose to do business in our area.

The businesses spanned a wide range of industries, from frozen food to luxury yachts. The history of these companies was similarly diverse: one company was the vision of a high school dropout. Another began its journey as a manufacturer of automatic voting machines and evolved into a producer of gas springs and vacuum actuators for commercial and private

use. Despite the large differences in background, industry, and approach to doing business among these employers, each had the same thing to say when asked what this region needs to do to continue to attract employers: develop a skilled workforce and improve upon existing transportation infrastructure.

As each presenter reinforced the remarks of his predecessor, I became increasingly excited for the future of the Greater Hartsville area. What is needed to produce and maintain a skilled workforce is a strong education system, from kindergarten through college. We are so blessed to have just that: a tremendously strong education system, fostered by a partnership between private and public forces, dedicated public servants, and business advocacy groups like the Hartsville Chamber. Most of all, we have some of the finest teachers and school administrators in the country. This much was evident when I leafed through today's Hartsville Messenger. In 2014, Darlington County schools increased their SAT scores by considerable margins compared to last year's scores, which allows us to affix hard data to what we already know in our hearts about our schools – they are routinely improving upon what was already a strong educational foundation. Renowned four year colleges like Coker contribute to this legacy of success as

well, with Coker enrollment soaring to new heights this year. The presenters also exhibited a strong desire for more technical colleges, and for more graduates of said colleges. Again, I felt like this was a strong signal for future success in our area (but then, how could I not, when I was sitting in a world-class facility in a world-class technical college like FDTC? There is a serious need for skilled technical workers like electricians and welders in our area, and we already have the resources in place to produce them.

I also represented the Hartsville Chamber at the annual meeting of the Darlington County Economic Development Partnership (DCEDP). This public-private partnership is composed of business luminaries from a broad spectrum of business, government, and non-profit entities, all of whom share the same vision for Darlington County – to foster a desirable environment for employers that will ultimately create those 'jobs, jobs, jobs'. DCEDP Executive Director and Hartsville Chamber board member Frank Willis spoke earnestly about the progress that has been made and the bright economic future for the county. He feels that 2015 is going to be a strong year for economic development in the county, and after all that I have experienced recently, I cannot help but agree.

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## GROWING GOSPEL GREATS EVEN GREATER

Submitted by Berlanda Durant

This visionary tried his best to prolong – or even avoid – this spiritual endeavor but insomnia, the absence of appetite and even the fact that his arms are too short to box with God catapulted him to a depth further than he ever imagined he would go. Marty is the first to tell you that his love for God and the Kingdom's work is far beyond explanation. There are tools that God has equipped me with for His ministry of music through song. Music is my life and I'm not certain how or even if I could function without it." God bestowed upon Marty the vision and work for Voices of Chronicles (VOC), at such a time as this.

In a repetitive dream across the past few years, the Spirit passionately whispered I Chronicles 15 to the Maestro until he heeded. And for that reason, the ensemble has fashioned its motto from the 16th verse of that very chapter: Marty Gamble and VOC will fill the air with a joyful sound as the Lord gives them direction and strength. The ensemble will use its bold sound to inspire the hearts and minds of people everywhere through paying homage and giving honor to the One we know is the Source of Life.



Anterio "Marty" Gamble – an aficionado of gospel music: a director, musician, song writer.

Marty Gamble and Voices of Chronicles debuted on June 6, 2014 and have since traveled the state singing His praises as well as at various church events and choir anniversaries. The Lord is the "Giver of the gift and we refuse to not exert ourselves fully in giving back to Him all He has bestowed upon us". For the cause of Christ, we shall forever dedicate our hands, our voices and our hearts to Him.



Pictured from right to left: Niasha Palmer, Adlaide Spencer, Bernetta Easterling, Faith Brown, Takeela McGee. Back row: Lashaunda Jefferson, Jeremiah Rouse, Henry McCrea, Erica Conyers. Not pictured are Michael Taylor, Damion Chavis, Eva Jordan, Jorinda Brown, Kimy'la Moore and Sabrina King. Berlanda Durant, Administrative Manager

## BUSY KEEPING ANCIENT TRADITIONS, TEACHINGS ALIVE

by Rennie Lunn-McAllister

If the church is mankind's universal ark of safety, then denomination should not matter. So, why does it? Well in the Transfiguration of Our Savior Greek Orthodox Church in Florence, the church's key function is as the Ark of Salvation, according to its leader. "As we surge in the seas of life, we are invited into the Ark to be kept safe from death, and it serves as a respite from the trials and tribulation of daily life. Inside the Ark, God provides shelter and comfort for His faithful," said Father Athanasios C. Haros in a recent interview.

Established in 1962 as the local Parish of the Greek Orthodox Christian Church, its mission is to assist people in living a life dedicated to Jesus Christ, following the ancient Traditions, Teachings and Way of Life of His Apostles. "Orthodox Christianity was established by Jesus Christ when He told Peter "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," he said, citing Matthew 16:18.

He continued: "Since its founding in Florence the church has stood as a reminder of that ancient faith and living tradition and as the Original Christian Church, the Theology of the Greek Orthodox Church has remained unchanged...remaining loyal to St. Paul's command to 'stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle (2 Thess. 2:15)

As for its organizational structure, Haros said "the Orthodox Christian Church is a(n) hierarchical one, following the synodal system first established by the Holy Apostles in Acts 15 and when it comes to our customs and organizational leadership, while there are numerous ancient traditions and customs from the time of the Holy Apostles, our Parish does maintain a number of local observances such as the celebration of Freedom on March 25th in honor of Greek Independence Day when the Greek people declared their freedom from the Ottoman Turkish Empire in 1821."

No respecter of race, its current membership is comprised of the faithful from various ethnicities, to include Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, Indian, Native American, African American, Romanian, Lebanese and Palestinian, in addition to the many native-born Americans who have embraced Orthodox Christianity by converting.

Because Orthodox Christianity is a way of life rather than a mere belief system, Haros said the church celebrates Holy Mysteries during which the faithful and their lives are sanctified by God. "Such mysteries include marriage, Baptism, Eucharist, Ordination, Confession, Anointing, Chrismation, House & Business Blessings, Adoption and funerals are but a few mysteries in which the church seeks God's blessings on our lives."

The church also enjoys interfaith relations and participates annually in the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce's Building Bridges program as well as the Greater Florence Area Ministerial Alliance and a variety of local charitable causes.

Is there much significance in the Greek vs. Russian vs. Eastern Orthodoxy? "Eastern Orthodoxy is the term which encompasses ALL Orthodox Christian Churches. Greek, Russian, Ethiopian, etc. are reflective of the various national churches throughout the world. In America, Eastern Orthodoxy arrived via immigration, so the Greeks opened the Greek Orthodox church, the Russians the Russian Orthodox church, etc. While they each have nuance cultural uniqueness, the faith and dogmas are the same. And Fr. Haros and his diverse congregation are here to keep it going.



Father Athanasios C. Haros



## BORN TO CARE FOR THE WILD

Submitted by Laura Hoxworth Editor & Content Strategist

In high school, Kristen Oliver kept herself busy—working as a waitress, playing varsity softball, excelling in multiple honors classes—and, sometimes, caring for baby squirrels. Her mother was a veterinary technician, which meant Kristin shared her house with everything from raccoons to cats to baby squirrels, which she helped care for



Kristen Oliver

and release back into the wild. “I grew up around animals,” she says. “We had four cats, a dog, a turtle, a fish, and two sugar gliders at one point. It was basically like a zoo.”

And she loved it. “I’ve known since elementary school that I wanted to work with animals,” the Coker College senior biology major says. By the time she reached high school, she knew a biology degree would be the first step toward her dream of working with animals. But she also knew she wanted a solid foundation of general knowledge, too. Coker was the perfect fit. “When I got on campus, I knew,” she says. “It just felt right.”

Kristen quickly succeeded in the close-knit biology department and thrived on the intensity of the coursework. “They always encourage us to ask questions and challenge us in class,” she says. But when asked what she loves most about studying biology at Coker, her answer is swift and emphatic: the focus on student research. In her freshman year, Kristen began assisting with research in Coker’s labs, at Kalmia Gardens and the nearby Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge. She values her early research experience for helping her build specific skills (such as species identification) as well as a general understanding of how scientific research works.

For someone with a mind as inquisitive as Kristen’s, it was endlessly fascinating. “It’s like solving a puzzle,” she says. “It keeps me asking questions and answering questions, which is what I like to do.” But it wasn’t until the summer after her freshman year, when she

landed an internship at the Center for Birds of Prey in Awendaw, SC, when Kristen really found a focus.

“I knew nothing, absolutely nothing about birds going into it,” she says. “They educated me on birds, and why they’re important, and how gorgeous they are up close. I learned identification, anatomy, training and falconry techniques, husbandry skills—just an enormous amount of things.”

Her interest only grew from there. On a study abroad trip to Costa Rica, Kristen completed an internship at a local zoo. There, she had the opportunity to train a small tropical screech owl—her favorite memory from the experience. The more she learned, the more Kristen realized just how much more was left to study. In the summer of 2013, she decided to take her passion to the next level—in 2013, she led an original study on the bacterial inhibiting properties of the uropygial gland. Located at the base of the tail, the uropygial gland releases a secretion that birds spread throughout their feathers while preening. Its purposes, however, are unclear. “There’s not a lot of research done on it, and that’s why I did it,” Kristen says. Specifically, Kristen’s project aimed to figure out if the gland might help to stop the growth of harmful bacteria.

To test her hypothesis, Kristen trapped small birds, sampled the secretion, and co-incubated it with bacteria. While previous studies examined whether or not the secretion affects bacterial growth (a yes or no answer), Kristen’s procedure—which she created—took it a step further by calculating a specific percentage of bacterial inhibition. The higher the percentage, the more bacteria was being stopped. The results? Almost 99% on some samples. While she’s quick to point out that the sample size was too small to produce statistically significant results, Kristen can’t hide

her grin as she explains the potential significance of her findings.

“It’s almost an antibiotic property, so, those are really big when it comes to human implications,” she explains. “If this gland can potentially help inhibit other bacteria, it possibly could be transferred into medicine.”

As she dives into the scientific details of her study, Kristen exudes enthusiasm about gland secretions. You can’t help but share in her excitement. “Kristen started off at Coker with a high level of maturity,” says assistant biology professor Jen Borgo. “The growth I’ve seen in her over the last three years has been in her excitement and certainty regarding her path in life. Every time I see her, she is even more enthusiastic about studying birds, and it’s contagious.”

In the future, Kristen plans on pursuing a PhD. She might work as a professor or at a non-profit conservation group. Making a scientific discovery is, of course, the ultimate goal—but mainly, she’ll be happy as long as she’s following her passion. Wherever it takes her, one thing is clear: this is just the beginning. Kristen’s career promises to reach spectacular heights.

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others and for leaving  
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world better than you  
found it.

—Marian Wright Edelman



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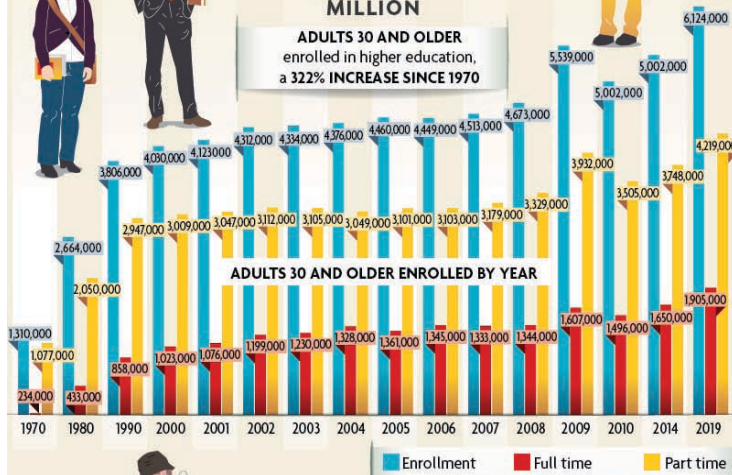
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## WHO'S GOING BACK?

College enrollment of adults 30 and older has surged in the past few decades and will continue rising, according to expert projections.

# 5.5 MILLION

ADULTS 30 AND OLDER  
enrolled in higher education,  
a 322% INCREASE SINCE 1970



# 350,000

PEOPLE 55 AND OLDER enrolled in colleges and universities



## VILLAGE ON TASK REARING YOUTH

Submitted by Dr. Dan Strickland

Back in 1996, then First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton published a book called *It Takes a Village: And Other Lessons Children Teach Us* where she presented her vision for the children of America. She addressed the impact individuals and groups outside the family have, for better or worse, on a child's well-being, and advocates a society which meets all of the child's needs. We embrace this philosophy in the Marion County School District, knowing that it is impossible to teach our students everything they may need to be able to be successful once they graduate from our system. Therefore we develop partnerships with groups from within our community that can be a part of the education process. The iImagine Work program is a



Dr. Dan Strickland Superintendent

perfect example of how businesses and industries in Marion County along with the Economic Development Board and the two Chambers of Commerce have come together to create the iImagine Work Job Shadowing

Program.

Job shadowing allows students to experience various career fields, learn about workplace expectations and skills required for different occupations, and prepare for their chosen careers. With the tremendous leaps in technology and the work place becoming more global, this type of program is needed now more than ever. Careers, such as data architect, crowd funding consultant or esthetician didn't exist five years ago. Traditional jobs such as paralegal, radiologist, mortician or a journalist have changed dramatically in recent years. High paying industrial jobs like CNC programmer, 3-D printer operator, welders and machinists are in extremely high demand. There is no way a single school can properly show students all of what the industrial and business world have to offer in the way of careers.

The iImagine Work program is truly a win-win program for everyone involved. Many of local industries find it difficult to recruit for some of the highly skilled labor positions needed in manufacturing their products. Ideally, they want to recruit from within their own area rather than relocate a person from out of state or even out of the

country. On the other hand, many students would like to stay in the town they grew-up in and raise a family of their own in the fashion they were raised. However, so many students are unaware of the types of jobs right here in Marion County and end up leaving to find valid employment.

The students are not the only people to benefit from this partnership. Teachers and administrators are also touring local industry and businesses so they too have a better understanding of what is offered within the community. This knowledge brings more depth to the lessons within the classroom. Schools can often tailor programs to help reinforce skills the local industry identifies as a need. The Careers and Technology Education center can add programs giving students marketable skills for local industry upon graduation.

So the community wins as industry gets the quality of skilled workers they need from the local schools, students find fulfilling jobs that keep them in the area and businesses thrive not only because they now have willing recruits but also because the local economy gets stronger.



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## FMU'S HILL-CHAPMAN ATTAINS BOARD CERTIFICATION

Submitted by Angela Crosland, FMU's Director of Communications



Dr. Crystal Hill-Chapman

FLORENCE – Dr. Crystal Hill-Chapman, associate professor of psychology at Francis Marion University and coordinator of the university's graduate program for school psychologists, has received board certification as a psychologist from the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). The national certification is relatively rare, especially for psychologists who are primarily in academics. There are about 4,000 ABPP certified psychologists nationally, fewer than 40 in the state of South Carolina. Hill-Chapman's varied academic roles did not require board certification, but she thought it an important professional step, especially as FMU continues to grow in the healthcare education field. FMU's clinical psychology department will be based at the new Health Sciences Complex in downtown Florence, when that facility opens in the fall of 2016. Much of the medical faculty at the HSC will have board certification in their respective fields. It is a standard in medicine. "I didn't have to do this," says Hill-Chapman, "but I believe it is something I should do."

Hill-Chapman is a Florence County native who earned both her undergraduate degree and her masters from FMU. She completed her doctorate at Texas A&M in 2006. She also earned a certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Clinical Genetics from Simmons University. Hill-Chapman serves as a thesis advisor/consultant for students enrolled in the Genetic Counseling Program at the University of South Carolina – School of Medicine. Her research fields of study include an array of childhood disorders. A developing specialty is the effects of childhood disorders on the family.



## MATH TOURNEY SHOWCASES BRILLIANCE

*Submitted by Angela Crosland, FMU Director of Communications*

**F**LORENCE – Marion High School, Scholars Academy, and Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School took top honors at the recent Pee Dee Regional High School Mathematics Tournament. The tournament, sponsored by Francis Marion University, the Pee Dee Education Center, and Mu Alpha Theta was held in the university's McNair Science Building's Chapman Auditorium recently. The 38th-annual event featured approximately 303 students from 21 area schools. Participating schools were divided into Division I, II and III schools. Schools with A and AA athletic classifications were considered Division I, while AAA and AAAA athletic classifications were considered Division II. Division III consists of private schools in the Pee Dee.

High schools participating included: Andrews, Carvers Bay, Central, Creek Bridge, Georgetown, Green Sea Floyds, Hannah-Pamplico, Hemingway, Johnsonville, Kingstree, Lee, Manning, Marion, and Mullins in Division I; Darlington, Hartsville, Mayo High School for Math, Science and Technology, Scholars Academy, South Florence, West Florence and Wilson in Division II; and The King's Academy, Robert E. Lee Academy, and Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School in Division III. All students participated in a one-hour, 16-question, written

competition during the morning portion of the tournament.

**J**ohn Mastroberti of Scholars Academy recorded the highest individual result on the exam. Qiyu (Stella) Dai of Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School and Alex Tew of Scholars Academy took second and third place, respectively. Those receiving honorable mentions in the written competition were Flavita Annisa of Marion High School; Neil Dey of Wilson High School and Mitchell Bast, Francis Bonadio, Biraj Dahal, Reeya Gupta, Curtis Leonard, Lauren Schexnayder, and Caroline Tew, all of Scholars Academy.

**T**he top four individual test scores from each school were combined to create a team score. The four schools in each division with the highest team score qualified for the afternoon finals. The finals consisted of four individuals from each qualifying school answering questions flashed onto an overhead screen. Points were awarded to the first, second, and third persons who answered correctly. In Division I, Marion High School defeated Johnsonville High School (runner-up), and in Division II, Scholars Academy defeated Wilson High School (runner-up). Among Division III schools, Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School defeated The King's Academy (runner-up).



*Team 1*



*Team 2*



*Team 3*

## Evrik's been busy.

During his career at Francis Marion University, **Evrik Gary** scored 1,787 points, grabbed 505 rebounds and was named to four different post-season all-star teams.

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## INSTRUCTOR TREKS GLOBE TO BETTER LIVES

by Les Echols

**H**ARTSVILLE -- A veteran in the education field, Governors School of Science and Mathematics teacher Dr. Bhuvana Parameswaran is a living example of diversity in science and academia. She first came to the United States to pursue a Ph.D in Molecular Biology after having earned her Bachelors in Science at Bombay University with a specialization in Microbiology. She thought she would stop with a Masters in Molecular Virology at the University of Pittsburg, but chose to enroll at the University of Delaware for a Ph.D., then relocated to University of South Carolina for a post-doctoral fellowship in Molecular Biology. Finally, she applied to the Governor's school for a teaching position that she has now held for the past 17 years.

Coming from the state of Tamil Nadu in the south of India, her native language is Tamil. But since her father was in a transferable job, they moved all over India and therefore could learn to speak a total of seven Indian languages, most of which have nothing in common. They all have different scripts and different grammar. "I had always wanted to come to the US to

pursue a profession in Medical Sciences Research, and met husband, Dr. Ashish Shankar, at the University of Delaware where he was pursuing a Ph.D in chemical engineering. When he started working as a Research Scientist with Roche Carolina, the couple moved to Florence.



Dr. Bhuvana Parameswaran

her uniqueness as well as to be able to accept the uniqueness of others was a big part of her transition. "My children, of course, are true American teenagers. But, they do talk and understand multiple languages and they do understand where they come from and are proud to be a part of the Indian diaspora."

Dr. Parameswaran has two daughters,

"When I came to this country there was a culture shock for probably a few months, but people were very friendly and made me feel at home. I was already exposed to western culture through movies and a few foreign friends" she said. Being accepted for

Priyanka, who is finishing an industrial engineering degree at Clemson University and Shreya who is a junior at the SCGSSM. Since ninth grade, Shreya had been attending the summer science programs at the Governors' school. So by the end of her sophomore year, she was very sure that she wanted to finish high school there and her mom is grateful for the opportunity, saying "I am very glad that she was accepted to the school. It will expose her to intensive academics as well as exposure to students from different backgrounds and culture. She will learn to live in harmony with them and solve problems in an amicable manner. She is very happy in the school doing well academically, and has made a lot of new friends."

**A** voracious reader with a love of neuroscience, Dr. Parameswaran also has a great interest in Indian music and has learned a classical native music and dance called Bharatanatyam. The family loves taking trips to different parts of the world and experiencing different people and cultures. Her philosophy on diversity is that "Tolerance of Diversity is the answer for harmony in the world".

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-James Thompson

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## HEALTH PROFESSIONAL HELPS STEM EBOLA EPIDEMIC

by Alicia C. Phillip



**Fredanna M'Cormack  
McGough**

In 2014 the world witnessed the most widespread outbreak of the Ebola Virus in history. The epidemic began in Guinea, and spread to other African countries, such as Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, causing significant mortality, and secondary infection of medical workers from other countries, including the United States. Many health professionals from around the world contributed their expertise in an attempt to help stem the epidemic. One such professional was Dr. Fredanna M'Cormack McGough, Ph.D., R.D., CHES, Associate Professor of Health Promotion at Coastal Carolina University (CCU).

Dr. McGough's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Health Science, with an emphasis on Nutrition, from the University of North Florida; a Master of Science in Food and Nutrition, with a focus on Public Health Nutrition and a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Health Education, both from Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. A native of Sierra Leone, who grew up in Nigeria and Kenya, Dr. McGough describes her initial involvement in the Ebola outbreak

as happenstance. As a tenure track faculty member at CCU, her duties include teaching, research, and service. Her line of research addresses disparities in access to health, particularly among women and marginalized populations, with a focus on pregnant and lactating women in Sierra Leone. During the summer of 2014, Dr. McGough had the opportunity, through a competitive grant from the Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE America), to do research in Sierra Leone, and while there, the Ebola Virus disease outbreak occurred. Naturally, as a health educator, Dr. McGough immediately sprang into action to provide education about the issue. She collaborated with an organization to go to rural communities to provide Ebola prevention education.

When asked about some common misconceptions that people have about the Ebola Virus disease, McGough expressed that the main misconception is about how the Virus is transmitted. Contrary to popular opinion, the virus itself is not highly contagious; it is not airborne. While the virus may travel in droplets, its maximum reach is three feet. In addition, a person can only be infectious if they are showing symptoms and have infected fluids exposed, and even then, those infected fluids would have to be introduced to mucous

membranes. She encourages people to have more faith in the United States' public health system. As with all infectious diseases, the system works very well to identify, follow, monitor, and, if need be, quarantine those infected, so that appropriate follow-up is provided.

Dr. McGough attributes her professional success to the fact that she's just doing what she enjoys. She advises other women to do the same, because it makes the challenges easier to bear. She adds that you should talk to people and find a mentor.

About the importance of Women's History Month, McGough expressed: "I believe that it is important to understand that there is a segment of society that had to fight for equality and are still fighting. It is important to recognize the efforts of those who have come before me and all of us to pave the way so that we can take advantage of the struggles that they have made for women to get an education, to vote, to make decisions about their lives, family, sexuality, and recognize that we still have a long way to go. It is a reminder that there are still challenges women face globally, and this month allows us to concentrate efforts so that people cannot ignore that equality has still not been realized and that we have to continue the fight for it....."

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# HONOR STUDENTS SOARING

Submitted by LaDara T. Josey, M.A., Executive Director



Jalyann Parnell

James Carraway

**I**nspire Us is proud to announce the 2014 Rising Star \$500 scholarship recipients: Jalyann Parnell of Timmonsville and James Carraway of Kingstree.

Jalyann is a graduate of Darlington High School where she was a member of the National Honor Society, the Anchor Club, and the Varsity Cheerleading Squad. She is currently attending College of Charleston and majoring in Biology with a minor in Child Psychology.

James is a graduate of Kingstree Senior High and was a member of the National Honor Society, Beta Club, and the marching band. He is currently attending Claflin University and is majoring in Biology.

Both recipients wrote exceptional essays regarding community service, maintained an un-weighted grade point average of 3.0

or higher, and submitted two outstanding letters of recommendation. The students received their scholarships in August. The Inspire Us Executive Team interviewed the two scholarship recipients in September. When asked how the scholarship benefited them with their college related expenses, James responded, "that it was a big help in purchasing books for his classes." Jalyann stated, "This award made it possible for me to reduce the amount of loans needed to pay my tuition." When asked would you recommend the Rising Star Scholarship to high school seniors and why, James responded, "Yes, It highlights academic achievement and motivates you to set your goals and make use of the money you are given..."

Jalyann stated, "I love the name Inspire Us; it gives me inspiration. I was hoping that you all (Inspire Us Executive Team) would be inspired when you read my application. My application told my life's story. Someone needs to know my life story. It shows someone else that I can be what no one else thought I could be."

**I**nspire Us is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of those in the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina

by equipping them with the necessary tools to live inspired lives. Our mission is to inspire individuals to achieve their highest potential by providing people and livelihood skills. The Inspire Us Executive team believes that education is vital for our children's success and has committed to making The Rising Star Scholarship an annual event to continue to encourage and support students to become "rising stars."

In addition to the scholarship awards, the Inspire Us team was able to provide \$50 Visa gift cards to each student who submitted a completed application. Inspire Us would like to thank each contributor, Naomi Project, Remnant Ministries, and Rita's Ice for their support. Students can begin submitting their applications for the Rising Star Scholarship April 1, 2015. Visit the website at [www.inspire-us.org](http://www.inspire-us.org) for details.



More than  
**1.2 MILLION\***  
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\*Figures current from 2002 though 2014.

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## FDTC MAKES HIGHER ED MORE AFFORDABLE

Submitted by Hunter Thomas, Public Relations/Marketing Specialist



*A Florence-Darlington Technical College Health Sciences student learns anatomy with the help of a tutor in the FDTC Success Center.*

Attending Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) will not only put students in the workplace quicker, but it can also save enrollees tens of thousands of dollars . . . possibly even before graduating high school. To take advantage of FDTC's low-cost options, first decide what cost-saving strategy best suits individual needs, whether it's taking advantage of dual enrollment courses, transfer options, summer school or scholarships.

Dual enrollment is quite simple. Those qualifying for the program can earn college credit while still in high school. In fact, earning enough college credits makes it possible to finish an entire freshman year of college while still attending high school. Thanks to the Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTA) program at FDTC, dual enrollment courses are free to students when FDTC offers courses at their high school. Lottery funding requires that six or more credit hours (usually two courses) be completed in a semester.

"Dual enrollment is becoming even more cost effective as partner schools begin to teach more courses on their campuses," said Nancy Reading, Dual Enrollment Specialist at FDTC.

"If a student enrolls in two or more courses being taught at their high school, then the courses are free. I am so excited about all the new and exciting possibilities that dual enrollment opens up for high school students.

"Dual enrollment really is the best option for saving money on college tuition as well as preparing students for college. What better way to prepare for college than to have the opportunity to take college courses while still in high school. It really allows

high school students to receive an introduction to college and an idea of the amount of work required."

Another way for students to save money is by choosing the transfer option. Students can attend FDTC for two years and then transfer to a four-year institution with junior status. Thousands of dollars can be saved when students choose courses that are assured to transfer on to four-year institutions. Log on to [www.fdtc.edu](http://www.fdtc.edu), click on the "Transfer Programs" link underneath the academics section, then view all transferable courses broken down by school and area of study.

"Florence-Darlington Technical College has bridge agreements with many four-year colleges and universities," said Dr. Shelley Fortin, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services. "By participating in our bridge partnerships, students can be assured that all of their credits will transfer to the four-year school of their choice. Florence-Darlington Technical College has agreements with Francis Marion University, the University of South Carolina, Coker College, Clemson University, the University of Phoenix and more.

"Students can save a lot of money starting at Florence-Darlington Technical College. It is a great way to get the first two years at an affordable cost and ultimately end up with the same degree as students who chose to go straight to a four-year institution."

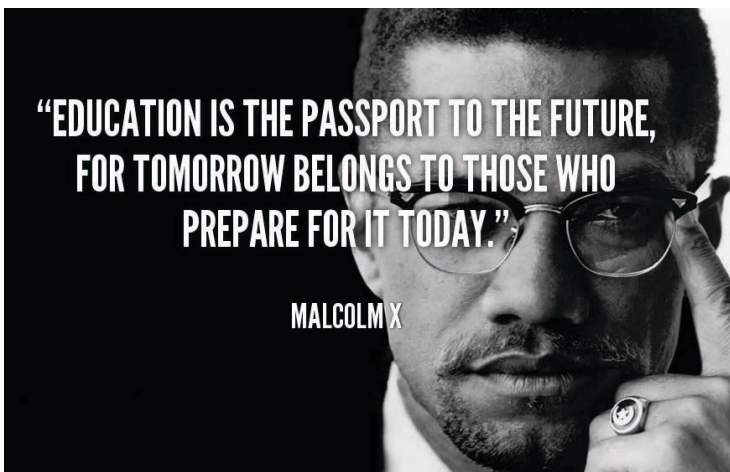
Summer school is a great way for students already enrolled in a four-year institution to save money while they're either making up credit hours or trying to get ahead.

"Taking classes at FDTC during the summer is the best decision a student already enrolled in a four-year institution can make for themselves," Dr. Fortin said. "You're still getting the same credit hours and educational value . . . just at a much lower cost than if you were to take the classes at a four-year institution."

More often than not, students overlook scholarships and miss out on the massive amounts of money they can save. Just know where to find the scholarships and how to apply for the funds.

"Scholarships are there for you to use, all you have to do is apply," said Jill Lewis, Vice President of Institutional Advancement. "The savings are incredible. Savings can be so large that they can literally make the difference in what school you decide to attend and how much of a workload you'll have to endure in order to stay financially stable. Please do your research, and apply for the scholarships that FDTC offers. You'll save yourself and your parents a lot of time, energy and money."

So whether you're looking to transfer to another institution, enroll in summer school or take dual enrollment/credit courses, FDTC is truly your affordable choice for higher education. FDTC's enrollment numbers are on the rise, and the college is placing more graduates in the workplace now than ever before.





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## NEW HVAC PROGRAM EXPANDS PARTNERSHIPS

by Les Echols



The Florence Career Center is set to implement a new Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning Technology (HVAC) program. The courses are Florence-Darlington Technical College courses that are being housed at the Florence Career Center. Students will receive high school and college credit for passing the courses with a grade of C and above. Students also have an opportunity to earn Industry certification in the HVAC field. With so many fields leaning toward more computer-based systems, the new program is seen as one that can make a big impact in preparing students for college and the workforce.

"We are happy to create partnerships and give students a hand up in college", said Keith McKenzie, Manufacturing & Mechanical Technologies Department Head at Florence-Darlington Technical College. His enthusiasm was echoed by HVAC Instructor and HVAC business owner Sheldon Shelley. "I'm excited about it; there is a big need for people taking interest in HVAC.

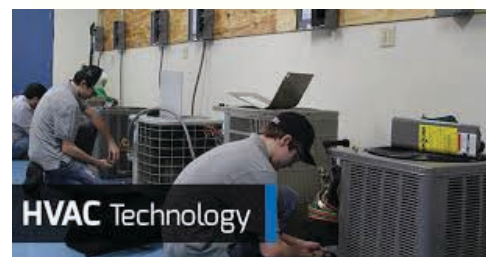
Students will be more prepared and can determine early if it's what they want to do. Those that want to go into a technical field will be more prepared", concluded Shelley. The program is set to be broken up into two modules, HVAC Technology 1 and HVAC Technology 2.

HVAC Technology 1 is designed so that students can perform basic maintenance and service on air conditioning and refrigeration equipment. Students receive instruction in shop safety, use of tools, tubing, soldering, basic compression refrigeration, electricity and covers trouble-shooting problems with heat pumps, refrigeration gas furnaces, electrical heating systems, and residential cooling systems.

HVAC Technology 2 offers students specialized training related to the design, installation, and repair of air conditioning systems for residential and commercial use. This course emphasize the theory and design of electrical, electronic, mechanical, and pneumatic control systems used in air conditioning systems; they might also (or instead) focus on procedures used in troubleshooting, servicing, and installing components of air conditioning systems. Upon completion, HVAC Technology

matriculates will be prepared for entry-level employment as an HVAC technician.

FDTCC HVAC Program Director Johnathan Cunningham said the courses are set to start January 2015. "The program will allow these students to get credit for some of the classes offered on the main campus in a shorter length of time, while also preparing them for the workforce", said Cunningham enthusiastically.





## JAMES KNOWS HOW TO ADVISE WOMEN, MINORITIES ON BUSINESS STARTUP

by Rennie Lunn-McAllister

For Wanda DuBose James, co-owner of four area McDonald's franchises, challenges are merely opportunities to enhance the present status and grow to do greater things, a daily goal that she and her husband/business partner Arnett James share with their restaurant teams citywide. "It is our call to continue our mature business process... even with the sluggish economy, we still have to wrangle the challenges that arise by providing jobs and added meals to the menus that ease the cost challenges that our communities experience," said the Mississippi native.

This is where the deepest appreciation of diversity comes into play for their day to day business practice. "Simply put, diversity value goes far beyond race, gender, age, physical and mental abilities as it offers us ability to gain greater enhancements within our workforce. It also reflects the multicultural and multiethnic characteristics of the nation itself. Back in 1965, then President Lyndon Johnson put in place the 'Equal Opportunities Employment Executive Order' to democratize workplace opportunities and career growth for all Americans" and in keeping with the spirit of that law, she believes that "workplace diversity fosters mutual respect among employees, it resolves conflict or facilitates an easier road to conflict resolution among co-workers."

James believes that a company's healthy practice of diversity is also important for building a positive business reputation which leads to increased profitability, closely associated with aggressive outreach and recruiting efforts, job/promotion opportunities and employee development and finally, it creates exposure to employees from different cultures and backgrounds, from which interactive learning grows.

"We make it a common practice to be involved in our community – which is very diverse – and we simply embrace this community by accepting ideas that help create a welcoming atmosphere and environment for different human qualities, performance, motivation,

morale and success. You see, respecting variety removes the barriers of segregating one's self from others unlike them."

A graduate of Southern University in Baton Rouge, LA (where she met Arnett) and William Carey College in Hattiesburg, MS, the former budget analyst with Litton Ships Sytems says that she recognizes that there is value in everyone. "I see that diversity contributes to the healthy and richness of me and my business which overflows right into our community and since I know how it enhances myself, business, community and quality of life, I affirm it in my actions and affirm this type of culture within my business. I embrace challenges, celebrate differences, and take pride in our achievements," she told.



Wanda DuBose James

Acknowledging that there is always room to grow when it comes to workplace diversity, James said that although McDonald's has been "pretty efficient in our process, this is one area where the workforce can improve, one advance direction being equal pay for all. Gender notwithstanding, equal work should command equal pay," she said adamantly.

A distinguishing advantage to their position at McDonald's is that, she said, "We are locally owned and operated, very involved in the community and we are hands on owner/operators in the day-to-day functions of our business. Additionally, when I mentioned equal pay within the workplace, I must say that our organization has had a longstanding culture to honor each employee with dignity

and respect regardless of gender, race, orientation or however diverse our employees are."

A member of several organizations in the Carolinas, James, who serves on the Boys and Girls Club of the Pee Dee's Executive Board, said that because McDonald's is a trusted brand, her individual and their corporate responsibility lie within helping communities. "McDonald's has a long history of providing scholarships, giving back to the communities they serve and sponsoring community, educational and youth in diverse avenues and endeavors."

She said that providing jobs and services impacts lives and that realization does not come solely from the head. "It takes heart... great selling, great customer service, great family and co-worker relationships, great friendships and as we have seen, great leadership, all comes primarily from the heart. In fact, in nearly every domain of our lives, if we have in our hearts the desire to serve others, we will be effective." Adding a favorite quote that ties in to her just-stated philosophy, she said: "We are all in this together; we are not nearly as right as we think we are and others are not nearly as wrong as we would like to believe." – Pat Bailey

"Sure, we may not always agree, yet having the opportunity to share and take diverse ideas, cultures, perspectives and implementing them in a cohesive workforce only adds value to us, the contributors and community," she said.

Mrs. James and her husband are proud parents of two sons: Arnett IV, a graduate of South Carolina State University and Alex, a junior attending Florence Christian. Together they attend St. Anne Catholic Church and she is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. She also serves on the Review Board for Foster Care and Adoption, the Business Executive Board for First Reliance Bank and was named SC Black Family Expo's "Business Woman of the Year" in 2009.







# Remembering Dr. King

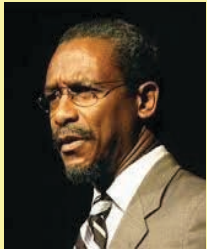
...a celebration of his life

Please join us to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and to recognize our individual and collective responsibility to continue his important work. 2015 marks the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Voting Rights Act.



**Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon, which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals.**  
~ Martin Luther King, Jr.

Editor's Note: With the theme of *Nonviolence: Saving the Planet* for the 2015 King Day Observance, we decided to ask some experienced activists from various walks of life to answer the question: "In order to attain world peace, what (3) steps would/should mankind make together?"



Dr. Lonnie Randolph Jr.

Our first guest columnist is Dr. Lonnie Randolph, Jr., a Columbia optometrist and so much more in that he serves as president of the South Carolina Conference of Branches NAACP. A zealous nonviolent activist over the years, he completed his early education in the Columbia public schools, did post-secondary studies at Benedict College where he majored in biology and graduated in 1977 from Southern College of Optometry with a Doctor of Optometry degree. In 2010, the Palmetto State's General Assembly adopted a resolution honoring him upon his retirement from the SC Commission for Consumer Affairs (more than ten of them as chair), expressing gratitude for his 30 plus years of "tireless and enthusiastic service" and recognizing him as one who "stands high among a number of true outstanding public benefactors and community volunteers". Dr. Randolph has maintained a private medical practice across the past 39 years, is former president of the SC Optometric Association and has been named Optometrist of the Year. His answer is as follows:

*"Before we talk about fixing the world, we must fix South Carolina first. This state has to be a leader – and we are a long way from being a world leader – in doing better by its citizenry. Everyone knows the Golden Rule and that precious metal does not know what a recession is; contrastly, it increases its value every day as we must do. We are anemic and deficient in exercising the Golden Rule. In light of the fact that a judge recently rendered the decision that South Carolina does not treat its children right, we must acknowledge that until we get a fair and just system of educating our children without restrictions -- and we do that by changing our policy from merely minimally adequate – we cannot move toward even state peace. George Washington Carver in 1912 said that 'education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom' and our present stance tells us why South Carolina still loves slavery and has not moved beyond it. Finally, September 17, 1787 was declared Citizenship Day in this country by presidential proclamation and here we are 227 years later and South Carolina does not ensure and protect the rights of all its citizens the way the Constitution spells it out. Today shows the greatest inequities still that existed then and we all have a full time job before us if we are to progress toward world peace."*

Our second guest columnist is Mary Demetrious, born in Florence and reared in Darlington, daughter of Chris and Katina Demetrious. A graduate of St. John's High, she earned a BA degree in History from Randolph-Macon Women's College in Lynchburg, VA and studied in Europe concentrating on European Economics. She has worked as a consultant to the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, as Projects Coordinator for the State Reorganization Commission and was previously the regional director for the State Human Affairs Commission. A participant in numerous conferences to include the Governor's Conference on Criminal Justice and a Civil Rights Commission Conference, she had leadership input at a Foreign Policy Conference sponsored by the US State Department, the 107th Congress of Corrections sponsored by the American Correctional Association and was a delegate to the National Student Symposium on the Presidency in New York. Following her internship at the Washington, DC office of Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, she was the first Democratic woman who did not succeed a husband to seek the party's nomination for Congress. From these experiences and what she has seen of the world qualifies her to answer the question above.



Mary Demetrious

*"When initially asked to write about world peace, I thought that I won't see it in my lifetime. However many of the trouble spots of the last century have roots in the decisions made during the Peace Conference... consider the Balkans, Middle East, Iraq with European powers drawing maps and other land disparities... animosities between Arabs and Jews, plus self determination for the Kurds... Germany did not surrender, there was no defeat...) but my first encounter with the results of an attempt at peace was in Greece. Martin Luther King is quoted as saying 'true peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.' Nowadays we must contend with terms like assassination which conjure up emotional memories of JFK, RFK and MLK. But we must press onward as Christian soldiers."*



Mary Wood Beasley

Mary Wood Beasley is wife of former SC Governor David Beasley, mother of four and passive community activist, and in her usual modest demeanor, had this to say:

*"My take on attempts toward world peace stem from teachings eternal: people should love God with all their heart, mind and strength; people should do unto others as they would have others do unto them (i.e. love one another) and care for and help the poor, the needy and widows. That begins the formula no matter where you are or are from."*





## ENHANCING THE ENLIGHTENED AGE IS ITS MISSION

by Rennie Lunn-McAllister



Dr. Todd Shaw

**C**OLUMBIA --In the University of South Carolina's African American Studies Program (AFAM), one unwritten objective is to help global citizens better realize their oneness. "It is hard to be a US or certainly a global citizen without raising awareness about how race, fundamental divides or even about slavery...because we can't understand each other if we lack that knowledge and appreciation," according to Dr. Todd Shaw, AFAM's Interim Director. This program was established at USC in 1971 and now has eleven (11) jointly appointed faculty members in the disciplines of Anthropology, Sociology, History, English Literature, Music, Political Science, and Criminal Justice.

So much more than just a review of history, this particular field is comprised of many disciplines (or is interdisciplinary) that studies

and analyzes the African American experience and race more broadly. "Our courses are not just for teachers of history; it is for everyone desiring to expand their understanding about how people of African descent in the western world have and continue to make this earth a better place to coexist. That is why we require the courses of AFAM 201 and 202 for our majors; they are a must for a liberal arts education," he said.

These lessons greatly impact career and intellectual paths, Shaw continued. "For instance, if you should one day decide to run for political office – no matter if it's locally or nationally or anywhere between – you should understand Black politics, Black political thought and Black activism, to name a few essentials."

Focusing on the premise for the program, Shaw said: "Because students are the center of what we do, it is key for them to understand what it is that we do, who they can be through it, where they can go with it, what they can attain or achieve from it. We actually connect

our students to the real world through jobs in their chosen fields of interest, through internships, shadowing/mentoring or studies abroad. They gain from that a perspective of our greater good... many, many doors are opened through these studies and we have much more on the horizon."

In his role today, Shaw says he tries to keep the pace that his predecessor established prior to her sabbatical leave. "I must give credit where it is due and say that Dr. Val Littlefield has planted all the right seeds in this program over the years and I simply am trying to spend some of the political capital she has established across time."

**I**n coining the 2014 motto: "You Can... With Af-Am", Shaw said his program's reach is universal. "The African-American Studies Program, much like African-American life in South Carolina, is about enabling full citizenship in the world. And we can only get that by learning, understanding and applying more of each other."

## RESHAPING THE WORLD VIA ARTS

by Anna Bowman



Dr. Tyrone Cooper

**I**NDIANA – Tyrone Cooper, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of African American and African Diaspora Studies (AAADS) at Indiana University, has accomplished what most people can only dream about – receiving three Emmy nominations for his talents as a composer. In 2012, Dr. Cooper received Emmy nods for his work on two PBS documentaries, "Open Door: China in Indiana," and "Musical Threads: Expressions of a People." Recently, he took a moment out of his busy schedule to discuss his unique experience.

"Working on two PBS documentaries was a dream that I did not actually imagine. I happened to be in the right place at the right time," he said. "Being nominated for three Emmy awards is simply a blessing from God for a southern raised Black male with no role models for learning film scoring", he stated. Nevertheless, Dr. Cooper allowed his education, training, and belief in himself, to guide him to a professional level where he is now, both respected and rewarded for his musical compositions.

Dr. Cooper received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Education from

Bethune-Cookman University, a Masters of Arts in Jazz Studies and a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology, both from the Indiana University. His love of music has been nurturing in his soul since the tender age of 4-years old. While growing up in Florida, he said, "My family had a gospel group, the Cooper Singers that toured and performed in churches, school gyms, theaters, and community centers in the southeast coast from Florida to South Carolina. He fondly remembered touring in South Carolina, especially Florence, his birthplace.

As a music director, guitarist, vocalist, composer, and arranger, he has worked with various national artists, such as gospel great, Donnie McClurkin, and the female duo group, A Taste of Honey. "I have been very blessed to have worked with some major industry talents via live performance or studio recordings. It has always been a dream of mine to engage music at a high level. I've learned quite a bit through my artistic connections with iconic artists," he said.

In his current role, as the director of the IU Soul Revue, a performance ensemble/course offered through AAADS, which examines and performs Black popular music post WWII to the present. He is able to offer his vast amount of knowledge about the music industry to his students. He has seen his dreams and passions transformed into the

dreams and passions of his students as they embark into the music industry.

In the immediate future, he envisions establishing arts programs around the nation, like camp S.O.U.L (Students Obtaining Unique music Levels). "Camp S.O.U.L is a rigorous summer program I founded at IU that serves underrepresented high school students by providing them with an opportunity to examine and perform Black sacred and secular music from the 18th century to the present (i.e. negro spirituals, blues, jazz, gospel, rhythm and blues, soul, funk, hip hop, etc...). Even more, camp S.O.U.L is designed to introduce students to college campus life, and inform them of academic requirements for entering higher education."

Dr. Cooper is married to the love of his life, Joii Cooper. The two, who met at Indiana University, are both singers and enjoy performing duets together.





## C.A.T.C.H. HELPS WITH CURE



Orlando Hudson, a native of Darlington, is an 11 year MLB veteran, a 4-time Gold Glove recipient, and 2-time All Star, but nothing compares to his success with his CATCH (Curing Autism Through Change and Hope) Foundation.

Hudson has always had a passion to help those coping with autism. He made a promise that when he made it to the major leagues, the first thing on his agenda would be to create a foundation that would raise funds to allow families and children coping with autism to live a normal life and to do things that they normally would not be able to do. After seeing that autism was not only a problem in his home town, but one of the entire U.S., Orlando saw that it was time to make a difference abroad and thus founding CATCH. The numbers of children with autism was increasing at a vast rate and CATCH wanted to be a foundation that helps to put a halt in the rise of the disorder. So in 2008, Orlando created the CATCH Foundation and has since raised more than \$100,000, all of which has gone to fulfill grants for the educational and familial needs of autistic children. Hudson plans to eventually raise enough funds to start a school that caters to autistic children to ensure that they acquire the life and social skills needed to be successful in life. Donors to the foundation's website may visit [www.orlandohudson1.com](http://www.orlandohudson1.com).

**The Best Intervention is Early Intervention – Knowing the Signs.** Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are most often diagnosed between the ages of 18 months and 3 years. Studies indicate that autism is four times more likely to affect boys than girls. There is also an increased risk if a sibling has been diagnosed with autism.

**Possible indicators, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, include:**

- Does not babble, point, or make meaningful gestures by 1 year of age
- Does not speak one word by 16 months
- Does not combine two words by 2 years
- Does not respond to name
- Loses language or social skills
- Some other possible indicators:
- Doesn't play with toys appropriately
- Excessively lines up toys or other objects
- Is attached to one particular toy or object
- No pointing or showing (SAARC, 2008)

If you feel that your child exhibits signs of autism please go to [www.autismcenter.org](http://www.autismcenter.org) for evaluation and diagnosis information along with treatment and intervention suggestions. For more facts and information about autism visit [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org). The earlier a child is diagnosed and treated the better he/she can enjoy life.



## HIS FAMOUS SMILE MAKES OTHERS DO THE SAME

by Anna Bowman



George Rogers

COLUMBIA – The first thing people notice when they meet George Rogers is his signature smile. A smile the Duluth, GA native has worn since he suited up to wear the Garnet and Black football jersey with the number 38 emblazoned on the back for the South Carolina Gamecocks back in 1977. Former USC's Coach Jim Carlen saw the potential of the future Heisman winner and made the freshman running back an integral part of his starting line-up.

Rogers can laugh about it now, but one person who really wanted him to stay in his home state of Georgia was none other than his dear mother. "My mother, Ms. Grady Rogers, didn't want me to go to the University of South Carolina," he said. "She wanted me to stay in Georgia," he reminisced. However, fate would be kind to the Georgian who decided to cross the border into rival South Carolina and made history for himself.

In 1980, Rogers would become the first and only Gamecock in the University's history to be honored as the winner of the coveted Heisman Trophy. "My mother was ecstatic when I won the Heisman Trophy!" he fondly recalled. After his stellar season, he soon joined the ranks of the NFL, as a member of the New Orleans Saints and the Washington Redskins. "I was Rookie of the Year," he humbly stated, as he recalled some of the accolades he received as an NFL player. "I made it to the Pro Bowl while playing for the Saints, and Super Bowl when I played for the Washington Redskins," he added, "receiving a Super Bowl ring was one of my most cherished highlights as an NFL player," he graciously stated.

After seven years in the NFL, Rogers returned to USC to complete

his college degree, and to work for the University as a fundraiser. It was during this time that he decided to start his foundation. In 1991, The George Rogers Foundation was established, and during the past 23 years, the Foundation has awarded numerous scholarships to deserving "first generation" students.

He stated, "While I was working with USC I had a vision to help kids who didn't have the opportunity that I had to go to school, so I started the George Rogers Foundation to provide scholarships to help first generation students attend school." Rogers, himself a "first generation" college student, understood the perils that families face in order to make a college education a viable possibility for their children, therefore, he wanted to make sure that scholarships would be available for them to attend and graduate from college.

First generation students in the Carolinas with a 2.5 GPA or higher, are eligible to apply for a scholarship at the Foundation's website, [www.georgerogersfoundationofthecarolinas.org](http://www.georgerogersfoundationofthecarolinas.org). Fundraising events for 2015 will begin with the Foundation's annual gala and silent/live auction on Sunday, June 14, 2015, in Columbia. The golf tournament will take place on Monday, June 15, 2015 at Fort Jackson. Donations can be made, via the Foundation's website, [www.georgerogersfoundationofthecarolinas.org](http://www.georgerogersfoundationofthecarolinas.org) or mailed to: Georgia Rogers Foundation of the Carolinas, Inc., P.O. Box 205, Columbia, SC 29202.

Mr. Rogers continues to work for the University of South Carolina and lives in Irmo, South Carolina. He appreciates the continued support from those who contribute to his Foundation as well as his loyal fans.



George Rogers today.



# Women's History Month 2015:

## Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives



### HER BOREDOM BLOSSOMED TALENT

by Anna Bowman



AlTonya Washington

**N**ORTH CAROLINA - AlTonya Washington, a Florence, SC, native and Wilson High School alumna, has been a published romance novelist for 11 years. The phenomenal success she found as a romance writer has catapulted her to the top of her genre and to date she has authored 49 novels and novellas and shows no sign of slowing down any time soon. In fact, in 2013, her Harlequin Kimani novel "His Texas Touch" won the Romantic Times Magazine Reviewer's Choice Award for Best Series Romance of 2012. This is just one of the many accolades that Washington has received since she penned her first novel.

Even though she is a very successful writer today, she explains how boredom led her to explore her talents and becoming a romance writer. "The summer after graduating from Winston-Salem University, I was bored and having read all my romance novels at least 10 times, I decided to write the type of book I wanted to see on the shelves," explained Washington, expressing, "At that time, there weren't nearly as many multicultural romances as there are today. I was ready to read about people who I identified

with, not only in look, but experiences, ways of life, culture, etc.," she said.

In 1997, her first attempt at publishing a novel was rejected, but Washington said quitting was never an option. "It was difficult seeing books constantly published and knowing that my books should be next to them," she said, adding, "There was a point when I began to wonder if I had what it took. Thankfully, I didn't question that for long," a jovial Washington quickly stated. Her persistence was rewarded when her writing caught the attention of Chandra Taylor, a former BET/Arabesque editorial consultant. Her relationship with Chandra Taylor resulted in her first novel, "Remember Love," having been published in April 2003, in which Washington told the story of an African-American couple faced with overcoming abuse, secrets, and the power of forgiveness.

The success of her debut novel led to Washington receiving a contract and her second novel, "Guarded Love," published December 2003, received a 4.5 star rating from Romantic Times Magazine. Suddenly bookstores were making additional space for Washington's third novel, "Finding Love Again," published October 2004. Because of her success as a romance writer, in April 2004, Shades of Romance Magazine readers chose Washington as the Best New

Multicultural Romance Author of 2003. "Finding Love Again" also won the Romantic Times Magazine Reviewer's Choice Award for Best Multicultural Novel of 2004.

**T**oday, thousands of her fans eagerly await her next novels, which are written with unforgettable characters who continue to live on well after her novels end. Washington, who writes in both the traditional and independent publishing markets, also writes under the pen name, T. Onyx, has penned several popular erotica titles, her latest being "Ravenous: Ruler of Perfection II". The success of her January 2014 romantic suspense title: "When Ice Melts," was a happy surprise for the South Carolina native. Washington followed that release with the anticipated sequel, "Layers of the Past." Her latest Harlequin Kimani title, "Indulge Me Tonight," released in September 2014 and she rounded out the year with the 18th title in Ramsey/Tesano saga, "A Lover's Control." In addition, 2015 will mark the end of the edgy series with the release of "A Lover's Return".

In addition to being a mom and an author, Washington works as a college Reference Librarian in North Carolina. For additional information, visit her websites, [www.lovealtonya.com](http://www.lovealtonya.com) and [www.alsreaders.com](http://www.alsreaders.com).

### TEST LEADS TO BRINGING OUT HER BEST

by Chinel Boateng



Shondia McFadden-Sabari

**W**hat would you do if at the age of 36 you became a double amputee? Would your spirit dry up like a raisin in the sun? Shondia McFadden-Sabari "scared the hell out of cancer, so it took her breasts and left"; then she EXPLODED!

"It was like a still small voice that said I needed to get a mammogram. I wasn't hearing strange voices and I didn't see any shadows. I had no lumps, no discomfort, and no discharge, nothing to make me think I had breast cancer. It was the Holy Spirit that led me to get that mammogram and I'm so thankful!" exclaimed Shondia.

Diagnosed with Stage 0 DCIS (Ductal carcinoma in situ) and LCIS (Lobular carcinoma in situ) in her right breast and, Stage 0 and Stage 1A DCIS in her left breast, Shondia underwent a bilateral mastectomy February 11, 2011. She chose not to have reconstructive surgery and does not wear breast forms. Shondia knows she's blessed to be a survivor and thankful that she's confident and bold enough to show other women that it's okay to be breastless, if they choose.

"GOD allowed me to survive breast cancer and I'm eager, to share my testimony with the world", said Shondia. And that's exactly what she does.

Shondia is the Founder and Executive Director of BOLDANDBREASTLESS, Inc. a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate people that have been affected by breast cancer. The organization raises funds to increase awareness; assist patients, survivors and co-survivors; and motivate the general public to take an active role in participating and partnering with cancer and health institutions and other advocates to help find a cure for cancer.

**A** documentary of her journey premiered at the Black Women's Agenda Luncheon, at the 2011 Congressional Black Caucus; GE sponsored her for their 2011 War on Cancer Campaign; she was the keynote speaker at the 2012 James E. Clyburn Research Scholarship Foundation's annual luncheon and was a speaker at the 2012 Sixth Annual National Conference on Health Disparities. Shondia was honored by the WNBA's Atlanta Dream team at their 2013 Dream Pink game; she was the keynote speaker for the Atlanta Braves' 2013 Breast Cancer Awareness Day and honored with a Diamond of Hope Award. Shondia spoke at the 2013 Breast Party Ever, a national event sponsored by BET

and Planned Parenthood. She was one of five breast cancer survivors honored by the Atlanta Falcons at their 2013 Breast Cancer Awareness game, and on January 28, 2014, Shondia received a resolution from the Georgia House of Representatives and was also featured on the National Weather Channel for their partnership with the American Cancer Society. Read about more of her 2014 activities at [www.boldandbreastless.com](http://www.boldandbreastless.com).

**"E**arly detection is so important! Yes, I was scared when I was told I had breast cancer! But I never questioned GOD and I'm on a mission to inspire people that have been affected by cancer. One thing is for sure; my breast cancer experience didn't affect my self-esteem! Sometimes I look at pictures of myself when I had breasts and jokingly say to those twins, "What did I do? You two tried to kill me and I took good care of both of you, for 36 years! I will thank GOD every day for healing my body."

Shondia is a native of Timmonsville, SC, she's married with two children, enjoys traveling and sharing her amazing story with others. You can read more about Shondia McFadden-Sabari's journey and bio, or make a donation at [www.boldandbreastless.com](http://www.boldandbreastless.com); follow her on Facebook.





## EDWARDS ADDS VALUES TO EDUCATION

by Alicia C. Phillip



Dr. Zenobia Edwards

**D**escribed by others as an advocate for social justice, Dr. Zenobia Edwards has been a notable figure in the field of education for more than twenty years. Influenced by her parents, both of whom are retired educators, Dr.

Edwards knew the value of a good education from a very early age. As such, she obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Wofford College, a Master's and an Educational Specialist degree from Converse College, and a Doctorate in Education from Nova Southeastern University.

As destiny would have it, Dr. Edwards' first professional job was as a science teacher at James F. Byrnes High School; the same high school from which she graduated, and where her father worked as a science teacher. Thus, she was able to teach side-by-side with her father for three years, an experience which she greatly values to this day.

After earning her Educational Specialist degree, Dr. Edwards was eager to learn the administrative side of education, and so, along with her new husband, Dr. Gerard Edwards, she accepted a position at Darlington High School (DHS), where he would teach math and coach, and she would function as an assistant principal assigned to the 9th grade building. In this position, Dr. Edwards' duties ranged from textbook dispersal, to student discipline, to departmental meetings, to parent conferences, among others.

Four years later, in 1999, Dr. Edwards was given the responsibility of implementing the district's first comprehensive, full-day alternative school program: Sonavista School. As Director, she had the privilege of leading the creation of this school program from conception to inception. One inherent misconception that she wanted to mitigate from the beginning of the alternative school journey was the perception that students attending the school were trouble makers with very little potential. According to Dr. Edwards: "This perspective did and does not represent my belief about the human spirit."

Consequently, the tag line, "Making the RIGHT Choices" became a permanent part of the school's logo and marketing. In her new position, she immediately applied for a Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp (JROTC) program at Sonavista School, which was granted, and Sonavista became the first alternative school program in the state to have their own independent JROTC program. This proved to be great decision, as the school's cadets were able to earn "Gold" Honor Unit status after only 2-3 years of having the program. In addition, Sonavista School was credited by the superintendent as the reason for a significant decline in the district's dropout rate. The School also received national attention by the National Dropout Prevention Center as an exemplary dropout prevention program. And Dr. Edwards was able to accomplish all of this, while completing the requirements for her terminal degree. As the program grew, there was a need to expand its initiatives, as well as its facilities, so in 2005, Sonavista School was relocated to the B.A. Gary Educational Complex in the city of Darlington, and the name was changed to Darlington County Intervention School (DCIS).

**S**ubsequently, after a two-year position with College Summit, Dr. Edwards was presented with yet another opportunity to facilitate an educational initiative from conception to inception. In her new position as founding Dean of Metropolitan College at Johnson C. Smith University (JCSU), she was charged with implementing the University's first comprehensive adult degree program, and designing, implementing and incubating a freshman access program, Biddle Institute. In 2013, both programs boasted their first graduates, with 90% of the adult students graduating with academic honors. Dr. Edwards recalls the pride and immense joy she felt as she called the names of her students and they walked across the stage to accept their conferred degrees.

Dr. Edwards later returned to DCIS as Director to continue working for educational access for marginalized students in Darlington County; a position which she currently holds. As Director, she is responsible for every aspect of the school; from personnel, to curriculum, to safety, to evaluation, to discipline, and so on. One of the programs

that she has implemented is called RIGHT Track, which enables willing high school students who are accepted into the program to earn unlimited credits toward graduation.

**W**hen she is not working at DCIS, Dr. Edwards is changing the lives of girls and women through her organization, I AM BEAUTIFUL, Inc. (IAB), which she co-founded with her sister, Tina Woodard, in 2004. IAB is an award-winning national leadership development and mentoring program dedicated to "Empowering girls and women to live Brave, Energetic, Assertive, Unique, Tenacious, Important, Fabulous, Unequaled, and Loved (BEAUTIFUL) Lives Inside and Out" TM. IAB programs build self-esteem and leadership capability in females of all ages and stages, supporting the achievement of physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and economic well-being. IAB recently celebrated a decade of serving girls and women - coaching them toward leadership development and self-esteem enhancement through education and effective self-advocacy.

Young girls and teenagers between the ages of five and nineteen, may apply to participate in IAB by completing a registration application, getting parent signatures on permission forms and waivers, and paying the registration fee. More information can be obtained from [www.iambeautiful.org](http://www.iambeautiful.org). Volunteer applications are also located on the website.

When asked what advice she would give to other women who want to achieve success in their endeavors, Dr. Edwards, the proud mother of one son, Collin Edwards, and proud aunt of nieces Lauryn and Zemyah Woodard, shared:

"I would advise anyone seeking to achieve a goal to keep the vision in front of them daily and to begin walking in the direction of that goal immediately. This follows the tenets of the teaching of my father, 'Get prepared...because one day preparation and opportunity will meet each other.' While walking toward your goal, get prepared."

Great advice indeed! Dr. Edwards continues to function as a highly effective educator with the Midas touch, leaving an amazing legacy wherever she goes.



### CONTAGIOUS CONFIDENCE BREEDS CONTENTMENT FOR THIS ARTIST

By Alicia C. Phillip



Valerie Hines

Valerie Hines is a rare gem. Her humble and down-to-earth personality is intriguing, considering her distinguished reputation and background in the arts. Here is a lady who, at the age of thirteen, sang for the Pope in Vatican City, and at the Notre Dame in Paris, and at Carnegie Hall, and before several other prestigious audiences. She was also supporting actress in the 1990 film *Voodoo Dawn*, alongside actress Gina Gershon. In addition, she nurtured and developed talents such as Kellie Rasberry of Dish Nation. Moreover, she was the first to bring Jazz Meets Japan to Symphony Hall at the Woodruff Arts Center, where she performed alongside the renowned Japanese Koto player Junko Takeo. She also toured with Bob Hope. And the list goes on and on. So outstanding is her musical genius, that just a few years ago, she was contacted by the great Grammy Award-winning blues musician Taj Mahal, who expressed his admiration and gratitude for her music in these words:

"Hi Valerie,

Not only like your material, but loved it as well! Thank you so much for recording 'Lovin In My Baby's Eyes.' Many folks claim they play my music and learn off of me, but rarely if ever am I moved by a version of my own song as much as I am moved by your take on this one. You got it sister!.....

— Taj Mahal"

Indeed, Hines, a product of low-country South Carolina and Georgia, is beyond a triple threat. A consummate performer, who has graced the covers of several national magazines, she is a distinguished contralto singer, composer, and song writer who plays the piano, guitar, and harmonica; as well as a folk

artist, actress, and former model and ballet dancer. Through her company Sweet River Music and Film Company, she produces and performs throughout the United States and abroad.

Her love for music and the arts, began at a young age. As the daughter of a gospel singer and a pianist, Hines was exposed to glorious voices all around her from birth, such that music was all that she could think about. Entering show business as a performer became her passion, which she pursued with intense focus.

As a young girl, Hines enrolled in private vocal lessons to hone her singing skills. Later, at the age of thirteen, she auditioned to be a member of America's Youth in Concert, a chamber orchestra classical choir group comprised of the finest vocalists in the United States, with which she traveled Europe and entertained some of the most eminent leaders in the world. She remembers with fondness how very hard her family worked to raise the money for her to have that invaluable and life-changing experience.

Another defining moment in Hines' career was her attendance at the Ebony Fashion Fair in Florence one year. She was so inspired by the couture clothing and Broadway-like production, that she determined to tour with the Ebony Fashion Fair team in the future. So Hines stayed in contact with Ebony all throughout high school and college, and upon graduation with a degree in Theater and a minor in Music, Hines auditioned for a coveted spot as a model, and was accepted. That position allowed Hines to visit 182 cities, where not only was she able to showcase her modeling talent, but when management discovered Hines' impeccable vocals, she was also asked to become Ebony Fashion Fair's first vocalist on the tour.

After the tour, Hines brought the lessons that she learned from that experience back to Florence, where she opened Valdotti's Model and Talent, through which she was able to nurture and develop outstanding pillars of the local community, and even national talent such as Kellie Rasberry. For her work, Hines was given the key to the City

of Florence. Hines is currently completing her second music CD, which she describes as a "folksy, bluesy brand of Americana." It will be available via her website on January 1, 2015 and will feature songs accompanied by such musical instruments as the fiddle, banjo, harmonica, and guitar, designed to put people in a happy mood.

When asked about her songwriting process, Hines says that songwriting is not a struggle for her at all. Music comes from her spirit, and she cannot explain how it comes.

Music is indeed her passion, and when asked about her future goals, after some playful banter about winning several Grammy Awards, Hines expressed that all she wants to do is: "Enjoy making the best songs possible through collaborations and alliances with the Sweet River Music and Film Company, presenting shows that uplift people to joyful places."

Hines advocates for more focus on the arts. According to Hines: "Nurturing of art is so important to the society. Becoming an artist should be developed during your lifetime. Art is made up of those ups and downs of life. Not everybody can be structured; life would be dull without artists."

She encourages other women interested in the arts to "be confident in your purpose and know that you're not alone." One of her biggest challenges has been maintaining integrity in her lifestyle and expanding herself as an artist with the goal of giving the service of joy. According to Hines, in order to maintain your integrity, you have to be content with what you have, and then, no matter if you're up or down, you can still find contentment in your life.

For more information about Valerie Hines, please contact her via e-mail at: [ValerieHines@ValerieHines.com](mailto:ValerieHines@ValerieHines.com); visit her website at: [www.ValerieHines.com](http://www.ValerieHines.com); find her on Twitter at: [@IAMValerieHines](https://twitter.com/IAMValerieHines); and on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/ValerieHinesMusic>.



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## SEALEY CLIMBS RANKS RAPIDLY

by Alicia C. Phillip



Elaine Sealey

If you bank at SAFE Federal Credit Union's Florence branch, chances are that you've met Elaine Sealey, branch manager. This proud wife of Paul R. Sealey, Jr. and mother of five has followed quite an impressive path in the banking industry. Her stellar performance enabled Sealey to enjoy a meteoric rise to branch manager. She began her banking career as a part-time teller at TD Bank/Carolina First Bank, and within a mere three months, she became a

Head Teller. Just a few months later, she was again promoted to a Money Manager, and subsequently trained for a manager position, which she obtained within three years. Then in 2007, Sealey moved to Florence to manage the West Florence Branch, and she remained with the bank until accepting her current position at SAFE Federal Credit Union in June 2014.

As branch manager, Sealey is responsible for sales development, community involvement, staffing, staff development, deposit and loan growth, leading financial classes, and mortgages. When she is not busy at work, or engaging in her favorite hobbies of reading, cooking, and exercising, Sealey is heavily involved in the local community. She is a Board Member of The Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce, member of the Lions Club, a Chamber Ambassador with Florence Chamber, a member of the Florence County Progress Legislative Day Committee, and affiliated with the Naomi Project. In addition, she completed the Leadership Florence program in 2011 and received the CEO Leadership award for South Carolina in 2013. A member of Greenwood Baptist Church, Sealey graduated from Francis Marion University with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Marketing, and from the South Carolina Bankers School at Lander University.

## SIX SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE YOUR BANK ACCOUNT WORK FOR YOU



Are you making your bank account work for you? These days, checking accounts come with a variety of features, such as mobile alerts, that can

help you take control of your finances and better manage your spending and saving. Are you taking advantage of them?

Follow these tips to ensure you're getting the most out of your banking relationship:

**\* Stay in-the-know with mobile alerts.** Many banks offer banking alerts via email or text that notify you when your balance is low, if a bill is due, when your paycheck is deposited and more. Alerts are a great way to keep track of the funds in your account and help avoid overdrafts and late payments.

**\* Set up direct deposit.** One of the easiest ways to get the most out of your checking account is by setting up direct deposit. With

direct deposit your money is quickly and securely deposited into your account, and banks often use this feature as a qualifier to avoid monthly maintenance fees.

**\* Track your spending using online and mobile banking.** Online and mobile banking are simple and easy ways to keep an eye on your account balance and spending. With your computer or smartphone, you can securely bank almost anytime, virtually anywhere. Many online and mobile banking services also enable you to transfer funds from your savings account to your checking to ensure purchases are covered.

**\* Use a debit card.** Debit cards allow you to access your checking account conveniently and securely, without having to carry a lot of cash. You can use a debit card at a variety of locations worldwide or at ATMs for deposits, withdrawals or transfers between accounts. What's more, debit cards offer security if your card is lost or stolen or if fraudulent transactions occur.

**\* Pay your bills online, write fewer checks.** Online bill pay provides an easy and convenient

alternative to writing checks. Whether you're paying the phone bill or paying back a friend for dinner, doing so with online banking keeps an electronic record of your balance, and eliminates the uncertainty of writing checks and waiting for them to be cashed.

**\* Learn how to help avoid overdrafts.** It can be easy to lose track of your money when you're busy balancing everyday life. You can help avoid overdrafts and the fees that come with them by keeping a close eye on both your account balance and the money you plan to spend. Some banks are directly addressing this challenge by offering new accounts that specifically help protect customers from overdrafts.

Some customers are seeking more predictability in the way they bank, and that includes preventing overdraft fees. It is important for customers to know that there are accounts available to help you spend only what you have.

Using these convenient account features can make your life and your relationship with your money much simpler and more productive.





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- **Veteran's Housing & Education**
- **Lifeline** (phone assistance)
- **LIS** (Rx assistance)
- **FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

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## FIRST TIME FILERS' TASK MADE EASY



Unless you majored in accounting, the thought of filing your own income tax return may evoke feelings similar to your first job interview. Though understandable, this is an unfounded fear, given the simple taxes most individuals have in their early to mid-20s and the easy digital tax programs

available. Follow these simple tips to successfully file your taxes for the first time and every year after that. First, don't procrastinate. Waiting until the last minute causes undue stress, and rushing increases potential for typos and overlooked information. While you can do your taxes in one fell swoop, it's unnecessary. Tax programs save as you go, so you can stop and finish at your leisure. You may reap benefits from starting early.

Second, gather all your tax forms and documents before starting your return, including:

- \* Form W-2 from your employer (you should receive by Jan. 31)
- \* Form 1099s if you're self-employed or a contractor
- \* Form 1098-E from your lender if you've paid student loan interest (even if you don't receive this form, you can still deduct interest paid).
- \* Form 1098-T for tuition paid and scholarships or grants received
- \* Statements for retirement savings accounts
- \* Receipts for charitable donations

After filing keep these papers, or make electronic copies to save with a copy of your return.

For more tax tips and filing information, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Get a tax checklist and file your federal return free on your computer, tablet or phone at [www.taxact.com](http://www.taxact.com).

## THE SANDWICH GENERATION: CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO WORLDS.



The "Sandwich Generation" refers to the large number of adults who are dealing with both young children and aging parents. If you are a member of this group, it may be challenging to find a safe and reliable investment that protects your family and addresses your specific

needs. However, there are more options than you may realize.

### **Preparing for the future.**

Caring for others is a large responsibility. But, there are many steps you can take to ensure that your loved ones are taken care of if something happens to you. First, contact an estate-planning attorney to help you write a will and update it when circumstances change. Secondly, think about purchasing life insurance, which can be tailored to the specific needs of you and your family. For instance, a term life policy can provide affordable death benefit protection for a certain number of years, and may be eligible for conversion to a whole life policy at a future date. Whole life policies provide financial security later in life, and their cash value can be borrowed against to serve as an alternate source of funds as needs arise. While there are events you can plan for, such as your retirement or your child's education, caring for an elderly parent can be unpredictable. While savings and investment accounts can provide some assistance, so can the right insurance. Simply put, members of the Sandwich Generation do not need to go at it alone. Term insurance, whole life insurance, and long-term care insurance are three strong solutions that can help provide financial protection for changing needs. 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 [jacord@ft.newyorklife.com](mailto:jacord@ft.newyorklife.com) or 317.289.3010.



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Only 7 percent of high school students are financially literate and fewer than 30 percent of adults report being offered financial education at school or college. Personal finance can be an overwhelming subject to learn, so many students have developed money misconceptions.

1. A person can save what is left over at the end of the month. Those who save by making automatic savings deposits right from their paycheck save four times more than those who only deposit directly into one account.

2. College is unaffordable. Most teens are well aware of the surge in college costs. However, many teens don't realize that, by comparison shopping, seeking financial aid and looking at alternative pathways to earning a degree, college costs can be more manageable.

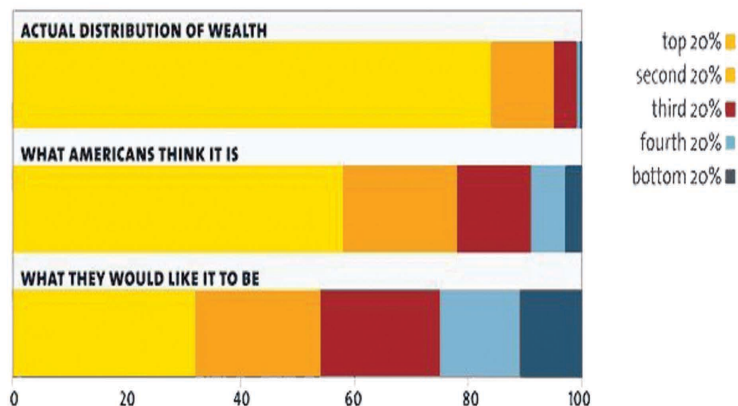
3. All debt is bad. Borrowing now to improve your future self can be a good idea. Student loans not exceeding your first year's anticipated income makes sense for most everyday Americans.

4. Overdraft protection is free to use. This couldn't be further from the truth. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau found the typical overdraft situation is comparable to a small-dollar loan with a 17,000 percent interest rate.

5. I don't need to budget right now. Teens annually spend nearly \$100 billion. Yet only 17 percent of teens maintain a budget. Budgeting is important now as small expenses can add up and get you into trouble - for example, the average American spends more than \$2,500 a year dining out, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Properly monitoring your spending habits can help avoid overspending.

6. Never use credit cards. It depends. If you're unable to control credit card spending, steer clear. However, they can be ideal credit building tools for young consumers who use them responsibly. Consider starting with a secured credit card, avoid borrowing more than 30 percent of the credit limit each billing cycle and always pay the balance in full and on time.

Having these misconceptions doesn't mean teens are doomed to have a damaging financial future. Proper education can help teens prepare for the real world so they can correct any misinformation received in the past.




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## HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

## EVANS PRESSES FOR TOP PATIENT SATISFACTION

Submitted by this Featured Guest



Jennifer R. Evans

Jennifer Evans is a native of Lynchburg, SC. She attended the Lee County School District, but graduated from Timmonsville High School. She is also a graduate of Francis Marion University and obtained her chiropractic education from Palmer College of Chiropractic. Dr. Evans states that she is proud to be back in her community, offering superior healthcare. As she makes the transition into practice with Dr. Carter, Dr. Evans states that she remains consistent in her pursuit of the utmost patient satisfaction, healing, and comfort. She also adds that she is excited about the opportunity to expand and work hand-in-hand with the Interventional Pain Management team. "Together we provide the highest standard of patient care and are focused on customized treatments for the best possible outcomes. For this reason,

*Jennifer M. Evans, DC joined Eastern Carolina Medicine with Joseph R. Carter, DC in September of 2013. Dr. Evans brings with her undeniable passion, expertise and leadership in the field of chiropractic and acupuncture, complementing the strengths of the existing organization. Dr. Evans completed a 3-month internship with the practice after returning from a Chiropractic mission trip in Fiji and is now practicing full-time. With extensive training in Chiropractic Pediatric/ Pregnancy care, Acupuncture, Neurology, and Basic Chiropractic Techniques, she is eager to commit to the advancement and growth of both, Eastern Carolina Medicine and the communities that they serve.*

I am proud to partner with Joseph Carter DC, Tommy Phillips Jr. MD, Stephen Tuel MD, and William Coleman MD," says Dr. Evans.

Eastern Carolina Medicine has been in operations for more than 30 years. This innovative practice provides the Greater Florence and Pee Dee region with an integrative pain management facility, with all services under one roof. "We offer the very best in patient care without providing long term use of narcotics," says Dr. Joseph Carter. "We use a variety of integrative treatments, which involve Western medical treatment, and holistic medicine, which includes Chiropractic and ancient Chinese medicine. We are pleased to have Dr. Evans join our practice as she complements the longstanding strengths of Eastern Carolina Medicine and its commitment to patient care. Since her arrival she has devoted herself to the treatment of pain and helping patients and their families achieve their long-term health goals."

Dr. Evans reports that she uses a "whole person approach" as her method of treating patients. This approach to wellness means looking for the underlying causes of any disturbance or disruption to the nervous system and making an appropriate treatment protocol, which may include Chiropractic care, Acupuncture, Nutrition, Lifestyle changes, and/or Rehabilitative

therapies. She implements this approach so that she is able to offer the most advanced and unique care to each patient, striving to reach their combined goals to establish and maintain optimal health. "What if I shared it as simply and as socratically as this; the brain houses the control centers for the function of every single tissue, cell and organ in the body and governs all other aspects of life. The brain communicates with the body through the spinal cord and spinal nerves. And, when you interfere with the communication between the brain and the body (or vice versa), the body CANNOT function the way that it was designed to."

Each chiropractic adjustment serves as a fine tuning tool of the nervous system allowing for greater communication and total ease and flow towards optimal health and function," said Dr. Evans. She adds, "The chiropractic philosophy that I embrace as my own is appreciating the power of the body and encouraging every individual to embrace their doctor within! I provide healing to the sick, hope to the hopeless, and most of all self-awareness, and charge my patients with the responsibility to for once take control of their health." She states that she enjoys using the natural/ holistic approach, as looking back she realizes that it was a major part of her upbringing.





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## CAROLINAS HOSPITAL SYSTEM WELCOMES ROBERTO MIRANDA, M.D.

*Submitted by Kim J. Geiger, Director of Marketing*



*Roberto Miranda, M.D.*

While growing up in Puerto Rico, Dr. Miranda wanted to be a marine biologist. “I loved the ocean. I went surfing and boogie boarding as much as I could, and I kept salt water and fresh water aquariums in my home,” said Dr. Miranda.

It was during a mission trip that he realized he wanted to be a physician. “I was in the ninth grade when my church went to Venezuela. While there, a friend fell into a creek and was injured. After observing her caretakers, I knew I wanted to help people who were hurting. She too was influenced that day, and decided to become a physician.”

Dr. Miranda continued to volunteer on mission trips throughout high school and college. He also served as a research assistant in college. He earned his medical degree at the Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara in Jalisco, Mexico and completed his residency at Manati Center in Manati, Puerto Rico. While attending medical school, he met his wife, Ednaliz, who is also a physician. They have been married 10 years and have two children, Robert and Victoria. The family is looking forward to being active in the community and are excited to call Florence their home. “The past two months have been great. I love the hospitality and the warm welcome we received when we arrived. Florence really does have southern charm,” he said.

Although, there are cultural differences, the people in Puerto Rico and the United States experience the same health problems. “Obesity, heart disease and high blood pressure are leading problems

among both populations,” said Dr. Miranda.

Dr. Miranda worked as a family medicine and ER physician in Puerto Rico, prior to moving to South Carolina to join Carolinas Medical Alliance - Primary Care. He enjoys the advances in electronic medical records, and how it facilitates better patient care. He is driven to help people and feels rewarded by his patients’ appreciation.

Dr. Miranda is board certified in family medicine. He is a member of the medical staff at Carolinas Hospital System. Dr. Miranda is fluent in English and Spanish. He is accepting new patients and walk-ins are welcome. To schedule an appointment, call 679-4019. Carolinas Medical Alliance – Primary Care is located at 2501 Vance Drive in Florence.



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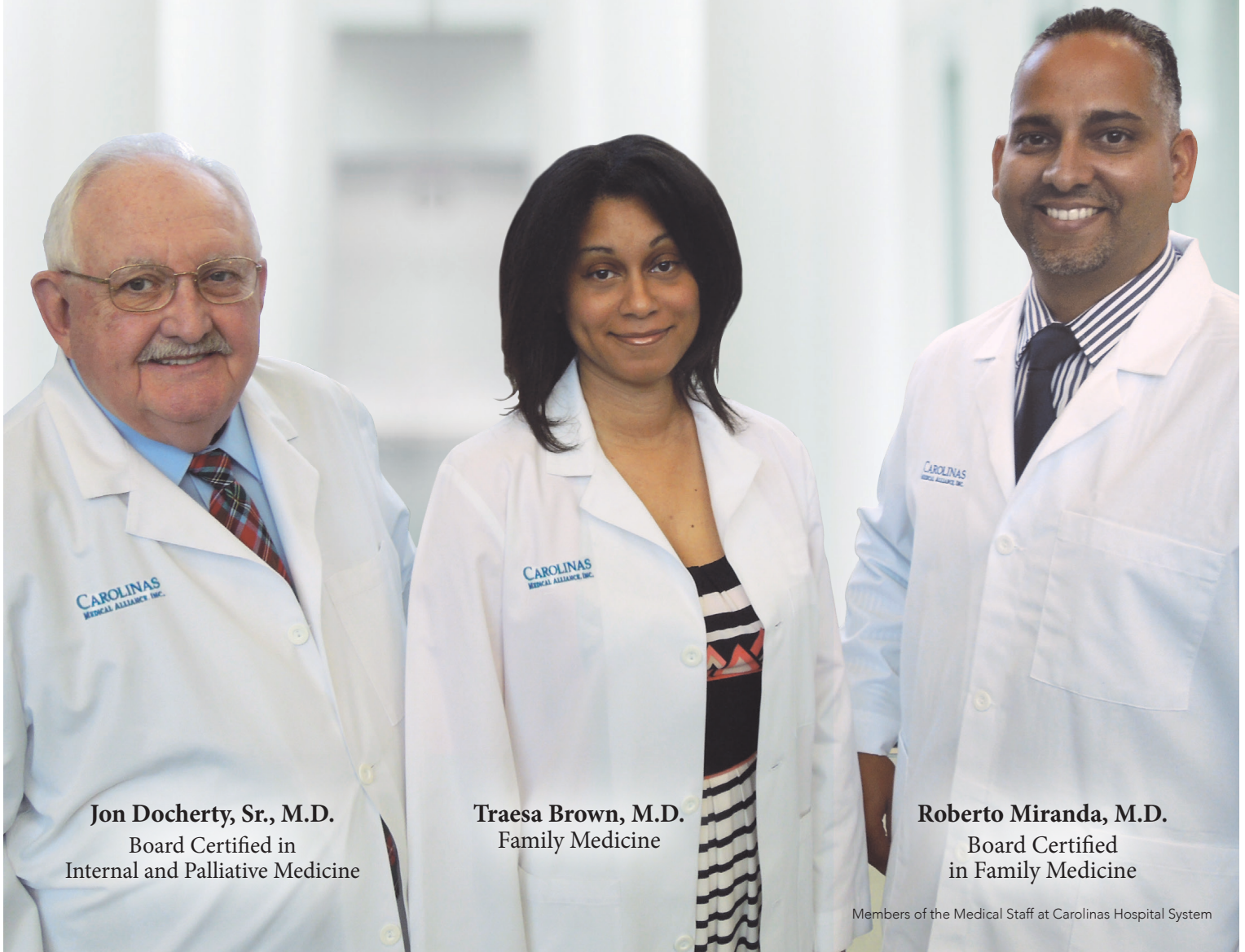
**Helping you take good care of yours  
is their life's work.**

Carolinas Medical Alliance is pleased to welcome Roberto Miranda, M.D., and his family to the community. Dr. Miranda is now working with Dr. Jon Docherty and Dr. Traesa Brown at the new Carolinas Medical Alliance-Primary Care. Our physicians provide patients with wellness services, treatments for illnesses, and the management of chronic conditions.

**Same-day appointments are often available. Call 843-679-4019 to schedule your appointment. Carolinas Medical Alliance-Primary Care is located at 2501 Vance Drive in Florence.**

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Members of the Medical Staff at Carolinas Hospital System



## DON'T GIVE UP WHEN IT COMES TO ARTHRITIS

Submitted by Dr. David Gittens



**Y**ears ago, doctors hardly ever told rheumatoid arthritis patients to “go take a hike” or “go for a swim.” Arthritis was considered an inherent part of the aging process and a signal to a patient that it’s time to slow down but not so anymore. Recent research and clinical findings show that there is much more to life for arthritis patients than the traditional recommendation of bed rest and drug therapy.

### What Is Rheumatoid Arthritis?

The word “arthritis” means “joint inflammation” and is often used in reference to rheumatic disease which include more than 100 conditions, such as gout, fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, psoriatic arthritis, and many more. Several features distinguish RA from other kinds of arthritis, signaled by the following:

- *Tender, warm, and swollen joints.*
- *Fatigue, sometimes fever, and a general sense of not feeling well.*
- *Pain and stiffness lasts for more than 30 minutes after a long rest.*
- *The condition is symmetrical. If one hand is affected, the other one is, too.*
- *The wrist and finger joints closest to the hand are most frequently affected. Neck, shoulder, elbow, hip, knee, ankle, and feet joints can also be affected.*
- *The disease can last for years and can affect other parts of the body, not only the joints.*

Rheumatoid arthritis is highly individual. Some people suffer from mild arthritis which lasts from a few months to a few years and then goes away. Mild or moderate arthritis have periods of worsening symptoms (flares) and periods of remissions, when the patient feels better. People with severe arthritis feel pain most of the time. The pain lasts for many years and can cause serious joint damage and disability.

### Nutrition for the Rheumatoid Arthritis Patient

Arthritis medications help suppress the immune system and slow the progression of the disease. But for those who prefer an alternative approach, nutrition may provide complementary support. Some evidence shows that nutrition can play a role in controlling the inflammation, and possibly also in slowing the progression of rheumatoid arthritis.

Some foods and nutritional supplements can be helpful in managing arthritis:

- *Fatty-acid supplements: EPA, DHA and GLA. Several studies point to the effectiveness of these fatty acid supplements in reducing joint pain and swelling, and lessening reliance on corticosteroids.*
- *Deep-sea fish, such as salmon, tuna, herring, and halibut, are sources of EPA and DHA. GLA is found in very few food sources, such as black currants and borage seed.*
- *Turmeric, a spice that’s used to make curry dishes, may also be helpful. A 95 percent curcuminoid extract has been shown to significantly inhibit the inflammatory cascade and provide relief of joint inflammation and pain.*
- *Ginger extract has been shown to be beneficial in terms of inflammation.*
- *A vegetarian or low-allergen diet can help with the management of rheumatoid arthritis as well.*

The benefits and risks of most of these agents are being researched. Before taking any dietary supplement, especially if you are using medication to control your condition, consult your health care provider or call us at 843.678.9394.

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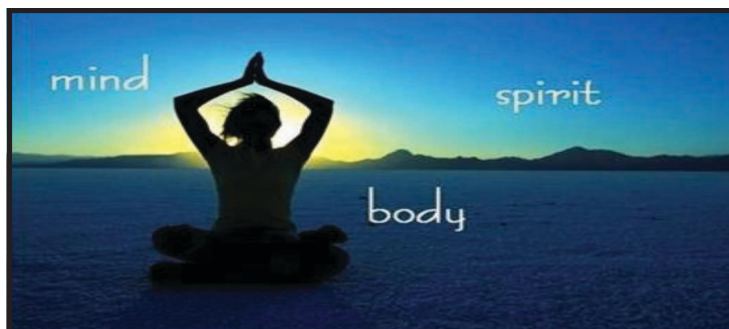
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## IT'S PRIME TIME FOR SENIORS!

Submitted by Melanie Colclough



Melanie Colclough

**D**id you know there was a new health care option coming to South Carolina for senior adults? Healthy Connections Prime offers access to better care by combining all the Medicare and Medicaid services in a single Medicare-Medicaid plan. Among other benefits, seniors will have ONE card – representing Medicare, Medicare Part D, and Medicaid coverage. Seniors will also have a person assigned to them by their plan to help manage their care.

Seniors currently receiving Medicare and South Carolina Healthy Connections Medicaid who choose to enroll in Healthy Connections Prime can keep seeing their doctors and getting services while they work with their care team to develop a personal care plan. This personal care plan will meet all their health and care needs.

- Prime offers **better care** by making it easier for seniors to get all Medicare and Medicaid services from a single health plan.
  - Prime offers **better value** through a care team and a care manager that works directly with them and their providers to ensure they get the right services needed.
  - Prime offers **better health** through flexible benefits designed to help seniors stay at home with their family as long as possible.
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    - o Primary and acute care
    - o Part D (prescription drugs)
    - o Skilled nursing facilities
    - o No insurance premiums
    - o No copays for doctor visits
    - o A personalized care team and care plan specifically designed to meet the member's health needs
    - o A care coordinator that work with the member,

their Medicare-Medicaid plan and their providers

o Ability to direct their own care with help from the care team and care coordinator

**A**dults age 65 and older who receive both Medicare and Healthy Connections Medicaid may be eligible for Prime. In the upcoming months, eligible seniors will start receiving information about the program. SC Thrive is partnering with Healthy Connections Prime to help educate seniors about the program and then help them enroll in December. Contact Tori West at [twest@scthrive.org](mailto:twest@scthrive.org) to invite us to speak to your group or organization.

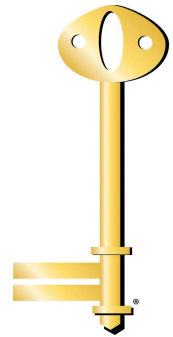
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(See related SC Thrive ad on page 32)

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## CHS AWARDED BIG TIME FOR SECOND TIME

Submitted by Kim J. Geiger, Director of Marketing



**The Joint Commission Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® 2013**

**C**arolinas Hospital System Nationally Recognized as Top Performer for the Second Time List Published by The Joint Commission Honors Exemplary Care.

Carolinas Hospital System has been named a 2013 Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® by The Joint Commission, the nation's leading accreditor of health care organizations. The honor recognizes hospitals that excel at meeting the Commission's stringent measurements for exemplary patient care. This is the second time Carolinas Hospital System has earned the designation. Only 1,224 – or approximately one-third – of eligible United States hospitals achieved this distinction for attaining and sustaining excellence in certain clinical measures. The prestigious annual list was released today in the Commission's 2014 annual report, "America's Hospitals: Improving Quality and Safety."

"This honor means that our community can turn to Carolinas Hospital System with confidence, knowing that we strive to provide excellent care every day," said Darcy Craven, Chief Executive Officer, Carolinas Hospital System. "Following evidence-based clinical protocols close to 100 percent of the time is not an easy goal to reach, but one that has been achieved through the dedication of our

physicians, nurses and other caregivers."

Top Performers are recognized each year for improving performance on evidence-based interventions that increase the chances of healthy outcomes for patients with certain conditions, including heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, surgical care, children's asthma, stroke, venous thromboembolism, perinatal care, inpatient psychiatric services and immunizations. Carolinas Hospital System was recognized for attaining and sustaining excellence in accountability measure performance for heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and surgical care. Carolinas Hospital System is one of just 712 hospitals to have achieved this accomplishment for two consecutive years. It was recognized in 2012 for its performance on accountability measure data for heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia and surgical care.

"We are proud of our physicians and clinical staff for their hard work to provide safe, effective care across the hospital," said Tommy Cox, Chief of Staff, Carolinas Hospital System. "The Joint Commission's recognition of our efforts is very gratifying for our entire team."

To be a 2013 Top Performer, hospitals had to meet three performance criteria based on 2013 accountability measure data, including: •Achieving cumulative performance of 95 percent or above across all reported accountability measures; •Achieving performance of 95 percent or above on each and every reported accountability measure where there were at least 30 denominator cases; and •Having at least one core measure

set that had a composite rate of 95 percent or above, and (within that measure set) all applicable individual accountability measures had a performance rate of 95 percent or above.

**"D**elivering the right treatment in the right way at the right time is a cornerstone of high-quality health care," said Mark R. Chassin, M.D., FACP, M.P.P., M.P.H., president and CEO, The Joint Commission. "I commend the efforts of Carolinas Hospital System for their excellent performance on the use of evidence-based interventions."

For more information about the Top Performers program, please visit [www.jointcommission.org/accreditation/top\\_performers.aspx](http://www.jointcommission.org/accreditation/top_performers.aspx).

Carolinas Hospital System is a leading regional acute care facility, comprised of 420 beds, more than 1,800 employees and nearly 300 physicians representing all major specialties dedicated to serving the healthcare needs of the citizens of Northeastern South Carolina. Carolinas' offers acute care, diagnostic services, women's health, cancer care, cardiac services, general and laparoscopic surgery, rehabilitation, emergency/trauma care, community health services and more. The hospital's Chest Pain Center is first in the region to be accredited and one of only 15 in the state to achieve this distinction.

Carolinas Hospital System prides itself on exceeding the expectations of its patients while delivering compassionate, quality care. For more information, please visit [CarolinasHospital.com](http://CarolinasHospital.com)



# Excellence.

**Named *Top Performer* by The Joint Commission.  
For the Second Year in a Row.**

By focusing on quality care for patients and doing what's right, we have received national recognition for the second year in a row. Carolinas Hospital System is recognized by The Joint Commission as a *Top Performer on Key Quality Measures®* for achieving excellence in performance on its accountability measures during 2012 and 2013 for Heart Attack, Heart Failure, Pneumonia and Surgical Care measure sets.

So what does our being a *Top Performer* in using evidence-based care mean for you? Peace of mind in knowing that some of the top healthcare in the nation is available right here in Florence.

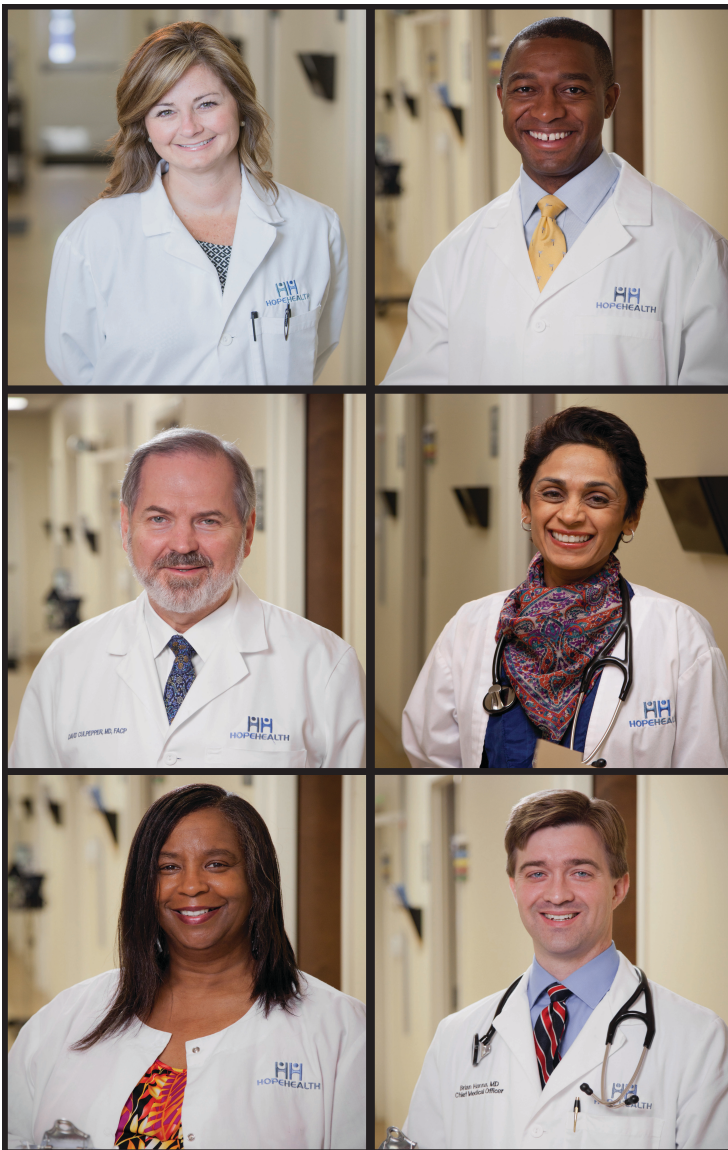
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The Joint Commission  
*Top Performer on  
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2013





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***Accepting New Patients!***

## **BUILDING HOPE THROUGH HEALTH**

*Submitted by Diane Davis, HopeHealth Marketing Coordinator*

Serving more than 31,000 patients annually, HopeHealth is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) with ten sites located in rural areas of the Pee Dee region, Williamsburg County and Clarendon County. HopeHealth also has an HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention center in the Pee Dee, Edisto and Lower Savannah regions. Community health centers are local, nonprofit, community-owned health care facilities serving all members of a community without regard to insurance status or ability to pay. They are located in medically-underserved areas or populations and offer services that make accessing health care easier.

“As a means to support patients who need specialty services and care that are not offered in our facilities, HopeHealth created the Hope Fund, whose dollars are used specifically to assist patients with receiving specialty care that is not offered at HopeHealth (i.e.) the cost of eyeglasses and vision appointments, dental work, cardiology and oncology, surgeries, prescription drugs and so much more. Currently, there are two annual fundraising events that benefit the Hope Fund: *Vino & Vocals... A Theatrical Affair* is typically held in February, and *AIDSWALK* is always the first Saturday in December, according to this author. While there are more patient testimonials than we will ever be able to account for, here are a few “Stories of Hope” that we have been given permission to share. All names have been changed to protect the privacy of our patients.

### **Stories of Hope**

#### **Angela**

Angela has no health insurance. It had been more than five years since she had seen a doctor to receive any preventive health care or screenings. She could not afford to pay out-of-pocket for these services. Angela became a patient at HopeHealth and qualified for our sliding fee discount program and was able to get essential health care services. We also referred her to have a mammogram.

The mammogram revealed a frightening bit of news: Angela had breast cancer. Fortunately, it was caught early and treated.

“Coming to HopeHealth really saved my life. If I hadn’t come, I’d be living today with undiagnosed breast cancer,” Angela said.

#### **Melissa (as told by a HopeHealth medical case manager)**

“Melissa is a devoted mother and hard worker. When her car broke down, she was beside herself because she could not afford the \$250 repair and was afraid she would lose her job. HopeHealth was able to help her pay for the repair which allowed her not only to keep her job and support her family but also to continue to come to HopeHealth for important medical care. For many folks, \$250 is a manageable sum of money, but for my client, it was a make-or-break situation. I’m glad we were able to help her make it rather than letting it break her.”

#### **Travis**

During a routine office visit, Travis informed his provider that he could not see out of one of his eyes. After a thorough examination, the provider determined that he had a cataract in his left eye. Travis did not have health insurance and knew that he would be unable to afford the surgery. Staff completed the necessary paperwork to have the cost of the surgery come from the Hope Fund, and it was approved. Travis is satisfied with the service he received at HopeHealth.

Not only does HopeHealth host annual fundraising events that benefit the Hope Fund, but we also accept donations from individual and corporate supporters throughout the year. There are many people in our service areas needing assistance with medical care. For more information, contact Diane Davis at [didavis@hope-health.org](mailto:didavis@hope-health.org) or 803-433-4124. Donations can be mailed to: HopeHealth C/O Hope Fund • 600 East Palmetto Street Florence, South Carolina 29506





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## THE UPS AND DOWNS OF UNITED WAY

Submitted by Stephanie Navarro, Community Resource Manager

In any given year, United Way of Florence County's work can be likened to a roller coaster, with dips and dives as well as uphill treks that make work both interesting and challenging. Happily, the United Way coaster leads to a very important and worthy outcome... positive change in the lives of people right here in the community.



Team members from Assurant participate in the 2014 Day of Caring by volunteering at United Way partner agency The CARE House. Assurant had 51 volunteers participate in the 2014 Day of Caring, held annually in September.

### The UPS... of Campaign

This year's "Everyone Wins with United Way" campaign marks the 60th anniversary of the United Way of Florence County. To celebrate all the positive changes the community has been able to accomplish over the years together, United Way decided to raise its

sights to a higher goal, now asking local corporations and individual donors to take the '6% challenge' by increasing their gift or campaign goal by 6%. Additionally, United Way has created the Sum of 60 initiatives which seeks to identify 60 new small business donors who agree to give between \$50 to \$500. This initiative will demonstrate the ability of a few to impact many when everyone works together.

Any increase in campaign will allow United Way to grant additional dollars directly back into the community, supporting those agencies that do the most good in the most efficient way. To become a part of the winning cycle today, join the Sum of 60, by taking the 6% challenge or by donating to the United Way for the very first time! Call (843) 662-2407.

### The DOWNS... of BIGGEST LOSER

United Way's Burn & Learn initiative is a collaborative effort that brings awareness to the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Through Burn & Learn, United Way's strategic partners Morning News, Miller Communications and HillSouth help to spread the health, lifestyle



McLeod Health & Fitness Center trainer Tory Zwanziger with his BIGGEST LOSER team (L-R) Windy Sitton, Mary Ervin, 2014 BIGGEST LOSER champion Mary McLeod and Modestine Brody take a picture with 2014 Pee Dee Vipers (L-R) Trevon Flores and Arnette Hollis after the "Work-Out Like a Viper" challenge.

and nutrition information provided by strategic partners McLeod Health & Fitness Center and Sozo Life & Leadership, with the goal is to increasing the overall health of the community again in 2015!

For the second year in a row, the Burn & Learn partners will host Florence's BIGGEST LOSER, a program that will lead 72 participants on a healthy lifestyle, weight-loss journey. Last year's contestants lost over 1,000 lbs. in ten weeks with most contestants maintaining or increasing their weight-loss over the course of 2014. The 2015 BIGGEST

LOSERS will have new physical challenges and support systems while enjoying the same level of fitness, nutrition and accountability. LOSERS will also be enticed by two grand prizes of \$500 cash awarded for both pounds and inches lost. Those who think they have what it takes to be a LOSER should consider joining the competition or visit [www.BurnandLearnFlorence.com](http://www.BurnandLearnFlorence.com) to complete a personal journey alongside the BIGGEST LOSER contestants! Registration for BIGGEST LOSER closes on January 12, 2015.

At the beginning of 2015, think about how to change a life (someone else's even) for the better. Whatever the choice, United Way can help, welcoming all to join the roller coaster ride that makes it easier to live and give United.



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# CREATING MASS CHANGE AND HOPE FOR SPORTS HISTORY

by Rennie Lunn-McAllister



CEO Wes Elliott Demonstrates StrikeTec sensors.

Whether exercising alone or caught in the throes of the fiercest kickboxing match, Elliott Fight Dynamics has introduced a new wearable technology to help sharpen any user's game, astounding multiple sports industries with its StrikeTec Sensor. EFD CEO Wes Elliott says: The StrikeTec Sensors will revolutionize the boxing industry at large but it will also revolutionize the fitness industry. Boxers are known to have great muscular and cardiovascular endurance, so the technique of boxing is a great fitness tool."

However, in the event that simply getting in shape is a goal, the sensor can help with that also and with that larger appeal, Elliott said he relies on diversity of the masses as well as within his organization. "Diversity is important at EFD because our industry is international and we value the insight of a variety of athletes, employees, engineers and

coaches. We work with teams across the globe and diversity is what helps our company grow."

He said that his most qualified and most efficient work team listens to all input and evaluates the idea or strategy based on its merits. "We strive for the best solution always in order to bring the best product to the market regardless of age, gender, race or religion. Plus, we are always open minded and willing to explore new opportunities and we feel other companies should be open to the same."

Seemingly set far apart from any competitor, Elliott contends that his company is "the best at motion recognition with wearable fitness technology and we capture the most accurate fitness information available on the market. With two arms, legs and feet, our sensors capture everything!"

Aiming to be big enough with sufficient product to market (and increase sales) and to continue to evolve as a leading technology innovator in a diversity of sports, Elliott says he is also gratified to be small enough to have the

agility to change direction based on the findings of EFD's Research and Development Team.

On a more technical level, StrikeTec Sensor displays punch calculations, punch type recognition, speed calculations, force, calculations and count calculations. This technology allows the user to determine if his/her punches are faster and/or harder and the progress can be tracked between the day/week/month and year. The real time efficiency of its system enables users to review statistics and make adjustments with a trainer in less than a millisecond.

So forward thinking, EFD has created an accompanying StrikeTec Boxing Training App designed to capture personal training and sparring statistics to help the user track and measure their training routine from a smartphone, tablet and a PC, the data (including calorie count) from which will be monitored live and synced with a Cloud server for personal storing and future review. Opportunities are plentiful for curious parties to become a part of sports history, so visit [info@efdstriketec.com](mailto:info@efdstriketec.com).



Biomedical Engineers George Fercana and Melissa Dunphy conducting a speed and impact test.

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## THEATRE ARTS DEGREE PAYING OFF

by Anna Bowman



C.J. Miller

The stage is set for the directorial debut of C.J. Miller, as he artistically guides a 25-membered cast for the emotionally engaging stage play entitled, *Crowns*, which will be performed, January 16-24 at the Florence Little Theater.

Miller, a Kingstree native, is a 2012 graduate of Florence Marion University with a bachelor's degree in Theatre Arts. Growing up, he recalled knowing exactly what he wanted to do, "As a child, around age 8 or 9 years old, I used to write stories and put on a kind of one-man show for my parents," said the novice director. "My first legitimate directorial debut came in 2012 with a program consisting of standup comedy, a short one-act play, and a unique sensual rewrite and performance of Dr. Martin Luther King's 'I Have a Dream Speech,' I wrote, produced and directed the entire event," he proudly reminisces. This experience allowed him the chance to realize his dream of becoming a director, he said, "I always had the feeling inside of me that I wanted to be a director, but that night cemented it in my soul. I've been chasing and living the dream for the past three years now," he said.

His reputation caught the attention of some of the board members of the Florence Little Theatre who mentioned Miller's name to Dan Abernathy, the current president of Florence Little Theatre, who approached him over the summer about possibly directing the play *Crowns*. "He was adamant about how strongly he wanted the play to be performed on the Florence Little Theater's stage.

The stage play, *Crowns*, which is being underwritten by Victor's Bistro and Garden Room and Nucor Steel, was written by veteran actress, Regina Taylor, Craig Marberry and Michael Cunningham. The stage play will take an intimate look at how hats are perceived as *Crowns*, especially as it relates to African-American women. The stage play is depicted as a moving and celebratory musical in which hats become a springboard for exploration of black history and identity as seen through the eyes of a young black woman (Yolanda), who has come down South to Darlington, SC, to stay with her grandmother (Mrs. Shaw), after her brother is killed in Brooklyn. Hats are everywhere, in exquisite variety, and the characters use the hats to tell tales concerning everything from the etiquette of hats to their historical and contemporary social functioning. Miller said, "There is a hat for every occasion, from flirting to churchgoing to funerals to baptisms, and the tradition of hats is traced back to African rituals and forwarded to contemporary times. *Crowns* create a tapestry of voices that transcends time and place."

Miller wants people to understand that, *Crowns* isn't really about African-American women wearing hats. "This is merely the vehicle used in the story," he stated. *Crowns* is actually about the importance of understanding the history behind tradition. The play will showcase emotions that anyone from every walk of life, regardless of race, nationality, or religious belief can relate to when they attend the show.

Miller is surrounded by a cast of talented actors and actresses, and his 10-year-old assistant director, Abigail Greenwood.

## GRAMMY WINNER &amp; STYX HEADLINE PAC IN 2015

Submitted by Angela Crosland, FMU Director of Communications



Aaron Neville

More big artists, and some new sounds, are coming to the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center this spring. Multi-platinum and Grammy award-winning R&B vocalist Aaron Neville and rock legend Dennis DeYoung, the latter of which will be performing music of the band STYX, are the first two headliners to be announced for the PAC's spring concert schedule. Neville, the R&B star known for number one hits like "Tell It Like It Is," and "Everybody Plays The Fool," will be at the PAC on Friday, March 6. DeYoung, former keyboardist and songwriter of the group STYX, will perform with his band on Saturday, April 18. Both concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets for both performances go on sale to the public in mid January. To purchase them, visit the PAC website at [www.fmupac.org](http://www.fmupac.org), call the box office at (843) 661-4444, or visit the box office at 201 S. Dargan Street. Telephone and in person ticket sales are available Monday through Friday between 12-5 p.m.



Dennis DeYoung: The Music of STYX



Florence Little Theatre



# CROWNS

January 16-24, 2015

**Underwriters**



**Victor's**  
BISTRO & GARDEN ROOM  
NUCOR  
NUCOR STEEL SOUTH CAROLINA

**Written by** Regina Taylor, Craig Marberry, and Michael Cunningham  
**Directed by** C.J. Miller  
**Evening shows** 7:30pm • **Matinees** 3:00pm • \$25 Adults / \$20 Students  
**Florence Little Theatre** 417 S. Dargan Street, Florence, South Carolina, 29506  
 843-662-3731 • [fitsdp@aol.com](mailto:fitsdp@aol.com) • [www.florencelittletheatre.org](http://www.florencelittletheatre.org)



## FALL DAY TRIPS ARE PLENTIFUL IN CONWAY

*Submitted by Eastern SC Heritage Region staff, a project of the Florence CVB*



November near the beach is peaceful and pretty. Conway, only a few miles inland from Myrtle Beach, is just the place to explore this time of year; the leaves are colorful and the town is full of life but not full of beach traffic. Conway is also one of the oldest towns in the state, and the Waccamaw River runs right through it. Fans of the outdoors this time of year should be sure to



*Dog Parade*

spend some time by, or even in, the Waccamaw River. The town's Riverwalk provides great views of the river and of the stately cypress trees on the banks. If inclined to get a little closer to nature, rent canoes or kayaks and explore the beautiful black water

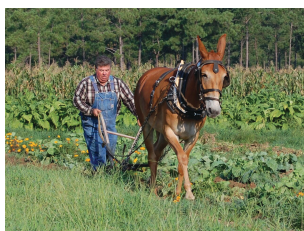
with a paddle.

For history buffs, Conway has sites not found in many places. First stop is the Visitor's Center for a tour of historic buildings, which includes several churches and other buildings that are more than 200



*Conway Visiting Center*

years old. Another significant building is the current City Hall, originally designed as a courthouse by South Carolinian Robert Mills, (best known for designing the Washington

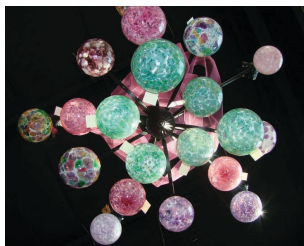


*LW Paul Farm*

Monument and the US Treasury Building). The Horry County Museum, which recently opened in the old Burroughs School, maintains its schoolhouse charm and is packed with locally significant artifacts. Conway and surrounding Horry County played

a big part in the state's agriculture industry. For those interested in old-fashioned farming techniques, the museum's L.W. Paul Living History Farm is a must-see.

Another thing people love about Conway is the very active arts community. Visit the one-of-a-kind Conway Glass studio and shop where the owners create fascinating blown glass pieces. They often have demonstrations, classes, or other ways for visitors to get involved.



*Conway Glass*

Historic downtown Conway and Conway Alive host a wide variety of events all year long from the canine costume contest to the Chocolate Walk and many other celebrations of artistic flair. Read more about Conway sites and other interesting places to explore in eastern South Carolina at [www.easternSCheritage.com](http://www.easternSCheritage.com).

## South Carolina African American Heritage Commission

&  
People to People of Hartsville

*Present*

Auntie Pearlle Sue



&

The Gullah Kinfolk



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Center Theater  
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The Gullah Kinfolk are the most exciting musical sensation ever to come from the South Carolina Sea Islands. Virtually all related, the closeness of this dynamic group is apparent from the first song. Audiences nationwide have been mesmerized by their unique style, memorable performances and uplifting renditions of their historical repertoire. The group was formed by Anita Singleton-Prather; best known for her beloved character Aunt Pearlle Sue, in an effort to preserve Gullah history and the Gullah dialect. A performance by the Gullah Kinfolk is a rare treat that will be remembered for a lifetime.

Tickets: Adults - \$10 Students - \$5  
Purchase Tickets at [www.scaaheritagefound.org](http://www.scaaheritagefound.org)  
or Call 843-917-3350



# DOWNTOWN INNOVATION BEGINS WITH JOHN KEITH

by Katrina Garnes



John Keith

**D**r. John Keith is a key player involved in the redevelopment of downtown Florence. Sitting from an optimistic view, he really understands the importance of always remaining innovative and creative. The revitalization of Florence means a more attractive and vibrant downtown experience, more business and revenue, and most importantly, a more diverse group of people.

Born John Keith, originally from the small town of Pamplico, SC, the now renowned pediatrician learned the importance of family bonds, the work ethic, faith, and the significance of seizing opportunities early in life. He recalls knowing that there was a world beyond the one in which he lived. After applying to three highly esteemed schools in the east (Clemson, UNC- Chapel Hill, and Howard University) and being accepted to them all, Keith would travel to Washington to attend the latter, alma mater of some of history's most influential African- Americans.

He went from a small country town lifestyle to a metropolitan environment that would further mature and expose him to things he hadn't seen before. He describes his experience in DC as motivational and after finishing there he went to attend Duke University, which he described as a "very different yet equally important" part of his life experiences. He said the environment at Duke was predominantly Caucasian, contradictory to that of Howard. Looking back on his experiences Keith says, "Both experiences were necessary, and you

appreciate what you're experiencing at the moment, but you never know exactly what you'll take from those experiences down the road."

After relocating back to Florence in 1999 as Dr. John Keith, he realized that there were not social spaces such as those that he had become accustomed to so that is when he made the decision to only stay home under the condition that he shared his experiences with the City of Florence. But the question was then 'Is the City of Florence ready for change?

"I'm one of those very optimistic individuals, regardless of what the naysayers say, pessimistic individuals think, even when things look dismal, or even when things are dilapidated or falling down around me, I always think there'll be a brighter day," said Keith.

In 2009 Keith, along with the City of Florence, collectively made the decision to renovate the police substation in Downtown, Florence. This would be the most logical start in Keith's eyes for several reasons; it would bring a police presence downtown so that when businesses pop up they'll feel safe, and it will bring a sense of safety to the general public in the area.

Shortly after the renovating of the substation, Keith would open Fountain Head, an upscale bar. The establishment was considered to some as being groundbreaking for the downtown experience! The business brought people downtown who had never been downtown, and some who hadn't visited downtown in years because of the perception of the area. The venture would be the "kick starter" that would re-launch the trend of businesses, transitioning and establishing themselves downtown.

Fountain Head, which later transitioned into Alchemy Tapas Bar & Lounge; would be the reason several investors and current businesses such as Hotel Florence would decide to put their

businesses Downtown. People had now begun to see the beauty in restoration and change. In 2013 Dolce Wine and Chocolate Tasting Room would open under the ownership and management of Keith's brother, Joshua Keith as a way to get his brother involved. Adamant about giving Florence the complete experience, he sent his brother to Belgium to become a master chocolatier. More recently, Keith opened 1031 American Grill specializing in gourmet burgers. Keith aims to bring businesses to Florence that are; exciting, different, and something that people in the area have never seen before, and he questions what better place to bring the businesses than in a downtown setting.

**W**hen asked about the future of downtown Florence, Keith says in that the next two to three years "we'll see the creation of Francis Marion University's Health and Science Building as well condos, eateries, retail shops, and restaurants and much more that will seem to pop up seemingly overnight"

Keith has recently opened a speakeasy restaurant and tapas bar called The Library as an addition to what Florence has coined "restaurant row". Keith called everything he's done "stepping out on faith" and says that without faith he would not have been able to envision and execute any of his dreams or accomplishments.

His next project will be yet another unique and exciting venture for the downtown area.



John Keith & Joseph Unrue, partnered seasoned restaurateur and chef, helping to build the vision of Downtown Florence!

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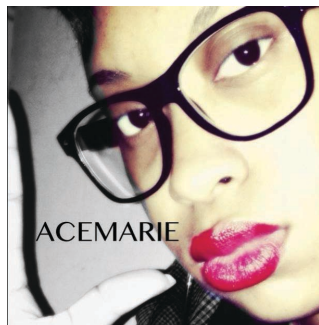
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## LACE MARIE MOVES TO HER OWN BEAT!

by Anna Bowman



ACEMARIE

Last October, millions witnessed the talents of recording artist/actress Lacyona Marie Muldrow, as she made her acting debut in the VH1 original television movie, *Drumline – A New Beat*. A Florence native, Muldrow, 22, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jackie (Wanda) Muldrow, and big sister to Lania. She is a graduate of Wilson High School and was a member of the school's band. Currently, she is a

member of the legendary Marching 101 Band at South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, SC. This past summer she utilized her skills as a percussionist to win the coveted role as the "stunt double" for the female snare drum character in the made for television movie, *"Drumline – A New Beat,"* which was a sequel to the highly popular original movie, *"Drumline,"* which featured Nick Cannon.

Muldrow, a senior, majoring in Music Industry, heard about the audition for the role, but was apprehensive about taking part in the casting call. "I heard about the auditions for the movie on three separate occasions," she said. "The first two times, I brushed it off and decided not to audition. The third time that it was mentioned to me, it just felt 'different,'" she said, adding, "It seemed as if God himself was telling me, 'Alright, this is my third time placing this blessing at your doorstep so 'GO' and 'TAKE' this (opportunity) and trust me,'" stated Muldrow. Once she decided to travel to Atlanta for the audition, she felt her confidence growing. "My family and I went on one hundred percent faith and prayer." After two days of auditioning, Muldrow landed the role of "stunt double" for the lead actress, Alexandra Shipp. Additionally, she appeared in various scenes throughout the filming/production of the movie, as well.

Even though this was Muldrow's first acting role, she soon realized that she wasn't a novice to the role she was about to assume. Her rigorous training as a member of the famed SCSU's Marching 101 Band more than prepared her for the role of a lifetime. "After reading the storyline of *Drumline – A New Beat*, my family and I, realized that the storyline corresponds to my current role as the "FIRST" ever, overall female section leader on snare drum at South Carolina State University," an exuberant Muldrow said about her history-making accomplishment. "I've always looked for my blessing to come one way, but it came in a completely different package that I never thought would happen for me," she added.

As a recording artist, Muldrow, who goes by the name, Lace Marie, is an accomplished musician who plays nine different percussion instruments. "I recorded my first CD back in 2008, which included 10 songs. Thus far, I have recorded two CDs. My CDs are available for purchasing on iTunes, by simply typing in "LaceMarie" and both CDs will appear. You may listen to my music at [www.reverbnation.com/lacemarie](http://www.reverbnation.com/lacemarie), or [www.momentville.com/lacemarie](http://www.momentville.com/lacemarie); additionally, you can download my app from any Android Market or Apple Store by typing in LaceMarie."

After graduation, Muldrow plans to work for a professional record label and receive a recording deal with a major label. She also plans to be a professional/nationally known female Full Set drummer for different celebrities. To keep in contact with Lacyona Marie Muldrow, aka, Lace Marie, visit her via her social Media sites: Facebook: Lace Marie; Twitter: @Lace\_Mariee; Instagram: \_lacemarie\_; Mobile App: LaceMarie, and Soundcloud: LaceMarie.



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# YPs KNOWS COMMUNITY'S NET WORTH

by Mallory Brayboy



Grey Raine and Robby Hill YP Golf Tournament

Young Professionals is a networking association in Florence, SC that unites young business people in a relaxed atmosphere for social and business interaction. It was initiated by John Turner and executed with help from Ed Love, Derek Brown, and Robby Hill. The group is a positive place for community-minded individuals to unite and a great place for those new to the area to meet new people. The 2014 President of the group, Barbara Rodriguez was one of those people. She relocated to South Carolina eight years ago from Charlotte, NC and joined Young Professionals as a way to meet other professionals in the area. Rodriguez says, "The YP Board is compiled of active community minded individuals who care about the growth of Florence, voluntarism, and giving back. It's no coincidence some of our former board members like John Keith and Grey Raines are part of the revitalization of Downtown Florence. Whether you are from here or a transplant like myself you should care about your community and want to make it better," she said.



Barbara Rodriguez and Mitch Hodge at YP Gala

Rodriguez, who was the first female and first Hispanic president of the group, says her involvement with Young Professionals has been very beneficial. Her duties as president included coordinating social affairs, conducting board meetings, and handling the marketing for the group's events. Rodriguez served as president for one term and has chosen to pass the torch. The group's newly elected president is Sarah Travis who recently joined the organization as a way to become more active in the community and broaden her network of connections.

One of the group's recent changes is switching from monthly social affairs to bi-monthly social gatherings instead. Travis is looking forward to having bigger and better social events. "I think we'll be able to engage more businesses who want to host and we'll have a lot more time to drum up excitement around it" she says. As president of Young Professionals Travis hopes to expand the business networking aspect of the group as she says networking has been a vital part of her own success.

Young Professionals offers an annual scholarship to a student in Francis Marion University's Business Department who is chosen by the department. They also award a Young Professional of the Year Award to a member of the group who displays a dedication to hard work and community improvement. The award recipient receives an allotted amount of cash to donate to the charity (ies) of his/her choice.

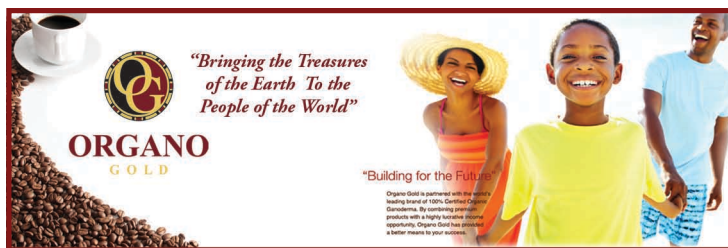


Nicole Echols

The most recent award went to Nicole Echols who donated her \$1,000 award money to Harvest Hope Food Bank, Lighthouse Ministries and Naomi Project (all of Florence). Echols, who is the Community Development Coordinator for HHFB and also volunteers at both Lighthouse and Naomi Project, says she sees the constant need from the community.

"To be recognized by my peers for my work and community service is a true honor. There are so many young professionals doing great things in Florence, so being acknowledged with this award lets me see that others actually notice and respect what I am doing," says Echols.

Young Professionals is open to all in the Florence area. Connect with them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ypflorence](http://www.facebook.com/ypflorence) or check out their website [www.ypflorence.com](http://www.ypflorence.com).



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## THESE JUST WANT TO TESTIFY

by Katrina Barnes

Organo Gold is a world class health and wellness company, known for its exquisite blends of coffee and premiere products. Thanks to Florence resident and independent distributor for Organo Gold, Quentin Williams, local residents of the Pee Dee have been able to reap the benefits of the super products distributed by Organo Gold.



Sonya Graves

"My personal favorite is the Organic Green Tea by Organo Gold! It is not only delicious, but it also increases my energy throughout the day. I can drink it warm or cold, and the healthy benefits are the same! I can't ask for a better salesman!" Says Sonya Graves Organo Gold consumer and customer of Quentin Williams.

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Katasha Campbell-Harris

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## FLORENCE MUSEUM – A DREAM COME TRUE

by Mallory Brayboy



*The Florence County Museum*

revamped its image in its new location on Cheves Street. The much larger facility allows for bigger and better exhibits, educational classrooms and a beautiful courtyard, all additions and improvements Miss Evans would surely be proud of.

The process began in 2006 when Museum Director Andrew Stout sent a proposal to the state of South Carolina requesting funds for a new museum facility. The following year the state passed in their budget \$3,900,000 towards the construction of the new building. Trustees of the Florence Museum had until 2008 to acquire a 2-to-1 match, meaning they had to secure two other organizations that would contribute 3.9 million dollars each towards the building construction in order to receive the state funding. Drs. Bruce & Lee Foundation committed 3.9 million dollars along with Florence County who matched that amount. In 2009 Florence Museum hired Cooper, Robertson & Partners of New York to design the building and construction began in 2012. The museum held its Grand Opening Gala in October of 2014 and reentered Florence

with a bang.

The museum features the work of Florence's very own William H. Johnson. Stout contacted the Smithsonian and told them of the museum project and asked to borrow Johnson's work. The Smithsonian agreed and Stout included that in the 2006 proposal to the state. Having Johnson

respectfully represented in his own hometown was a great achievement for Stout, who had studied the artist for 15 years. "These paintings have a special meaning to Florence and they mean something different to our community here versus their own exhibition in other places", says Stout. Living relatives were able to view family members for the first time and Johnson's nephew, William Johnson, was able to view his mother's portrait being depicted in the immaculate 'Lil Sis' oil painting. Johnson's painting *Jacobia Hotel* is also the only visual documentation of that place which once stood in Florence. "He's a superstar", gushed Stout. "He's one of the top ten most important artists of the 20th century and he's a Florence native; we are very proud of that."

This became a special project not only to Stout, but to the chief curator and the director of the Smithsonian as well. They suggested pieces that they were currently showcasing. Their policy does not allow

works currently being displayed by the Smithsonian to be loaned out, but the Florence Museum was able to receive some of those works.

The Southern Art Collection features William H. Johnson along with artists who practiced in the South or influenced other artists from the South. Many pieces from this collection are from an art movement known as The Charleston Renaissance. This movement consisted of a romanticized idea of the South. Johnson, however, was a part of the Harlem Renaissance, practically occurring at the same time in history. Johnson documented what he felt was the true rural south. Visitors of the Florence Museum will experience art showing two totally different views of the world at one point in time. "It's a huge drive for us to exhibit these pieces, not just because we're passionate about the stories that they tell but also because we feel that they are important to our children and they can learn from them." says Stout. The Museum Director is looking forward to the future of the Florence Museum. Guided tours, children's classes, and weekly adult art classes will be offered in 2015. The museum will also begin having concerts in its exquisite courtyard and Family Days on Sundays. As Founder Jane Evans' dream comes full circle doors are being opened, inspiring another, diverse generation of people to dream as well.



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