

DIVERSITYWORKS

APRIL 2017 VOLUME 7 ISSUE 2

"For All of Us"



GARY MALAER



STARLEE ALEXANDER



FRANCES JONES SEGARS



PASTOR DEAN PAGE

TRAILBLAZER REDEFINED
PUTTING "SELF" TO THE SIDE

NEW HOSPITAL CEO
SET TO BRING THE BEST SERVICE

RECOGNIZING ONE
WHO TRULY DESERVES

ACHIEVE FINANCIAL SUCCESS
BY INVESTING WITH A VET

FINDING STRENGTH
FOR ALL THROUGH RACIAL HARMONY

FEATURING:

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BUSINESS

4	DIVERSE BY 2025
5	NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS
6	SUCCESSFULLY STREAMLINING ADVERTISING SOLUTIONS
7	PROPELLING OTHERS FORWARD
8	OPPORTUNITIES FOR D&I PRACTITIONERS
10	LAKE CITY ELECTS COUNCILWOMAN PEGGY SEBNICK
11	REPLACING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES THE SUBMARINE WAY
13	IT'S A WRAP FOR 2016! WHAT'S NEXT?
14	2017 UPDATES FROM THE GREATER FLORENCE CHAMBER
16	MARC BURT: HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY INCREASE INCLUSION
20	CREATING DESIRABLE JOBS

DIVERSITY IN SPIRITUALITY

21	AN UNCOMPLICATED GOSPEL FOR EVERY SITUATION
----	---

EDUCATION

22	DCSD TRANSFORMS INITIATIVE EARNS PRESTIGIOUS TIPS
22	DCSD NO. 1 IN GRADUATION RATE IN SC
23	GSSM ANNOUNCES NEW VP OF VIRTUAL ENGINEERING
24	FSD1 BOARD MEMBERS EARN RECOGNITION
24	WILSON STUDENTS SERVE AS READING BUDDIES
29	EXTENDING THE CCU BRAND BEYOND SOUTH CAROLINA
26	DR. LUNS C. RICHARDSON ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT PLANS
27	FDTC'S LAKISCHI LIVINGSTON NAMED TOP ADMINISTRATOR
27	FDTC'S ONLINE COLLEGE CONTINUES ITS REBRANDING
29	TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO TEACH TECHNOLOGY
29	NEW HEALTHCARE ADMIN DEGREE FLOURISHING AT FMU
30	FMU'S PETERSON RECEIVES NCNW STATE EDUCATION
30	FMU'S ONLINE PROGRAMS RANKED AMONG STATE'S BEST
31	PURSUING EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
33	LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM
34	3 WAYS SCHOOLS ARE REDEFINING MEALTIME
35	CHOIR STUDENTS EARN ALL-STATE HONORS
35	ROTARY CLUB CONTINUES SUPPORT
35	SIX DCSD STUDENTS EARN ART COMPETITION HONORS

SPECIAL

36	PUTTING "SELF" TO THE SIDE TO BLAZE TRAILS FOR OTHERS
38	PURSUING THE DREAM OF DR. KING
38	FINDING STRENGTH FOR ALL THROUGH RACIAL HARMONY
39	CHRIS HANDLEY: LEADING THE WAY
40	BEING AN UNEXPECTED INFLUENCER
40	CELEBRATING SOMEONE WHO SERVE OTHERS
41	COMING TO THE FOREFRONT TO FIGHT THE CRISIS
42	BRIDGING THE GAP IN EDUCATION
42	IVY POPE: MAINTAINING A FURNITURE LEGACY
43	JEANNETTE GLENN: CHILDHOOD DREAMS
43	ON BECOMING WELL RESPECTED IN THE LEGAL FIELD
44	ACHIEVE FINANCIAL SUCCESS BY INVESTING WITH A VET
44	USING FRANKNESS TO REMIND OTHERS
45	RECOGNIZING ONE WHO TRULY DESERVES IT

FINANCIAL

46	ABB LATTA GRAND OPENING
46	RUSTY RICHARDSON APPOINTED COO
47	HISPANICS AT THE FOREFRONT OF DIGITAL BANKING
48	SUPPORT YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY WITH LIFE INSURANCE

HEALTH

49	DREAD CANCER SCREENINGS?
50	KICKING OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH A HEART HEALTHY START
51	LIGHT AND LOW-LEVEL LASER THERAPY

53	NEW HOSPITAL CEO SET TO BRING THE BEST SERVICE
54	UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH GAURAV PATEL, MD
55	INFECTIOUS DISEASES: A LOOK AT MICROBIAL PROBLEMS
56	THE TRUTH BEHIND 2 'HEALTH' FOODS
57	READY FOR WOMEN SEEKING REHABILITATION
58	CHS – MARION LAUNCHES SENIOR CIRCLE
58	CHS – MARION WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIAN
58	DR. CHRISTY PROSE: FOLLOWING HER CALLING TO CARE
60	AN EASY WAY TO SAVE ON YOUR HEALTHCARE IN 2017
62	NEW YEAR, NEW YOU WITH FLORENCE'S BIGGEST LOSER
62	FEELING TIRED? IRON UP

LIFESTYLES

63	WHAT TO DO WHEN A SENIOR LOVED ONE WANDERS
64	THE 45'ERS: DEMONSTRATING A LIFE OF SERVICE
65	FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT THROUGH QUENTIN WILLIAMS
66	PEE DEE WRITERS TAKE A VOW OF SILENCE
66	WANT A MEMORY BOOST? TRY A HEARING TEST
67	PENSION PLAN FUNDING SHORTFALLS THREATEN RETIREES
68	IT'S A SPRING TO REMEMBER AT THE PAC
70	GETTING THE MOST OUT OF A DIVERSE TEAM
71	BRINGING MUSICAL VARIETIES BACK TO SOUTH CAROLINA
72	BRINGING A UNIQUE BREWING EXPERIENCE TO FLORENCE
74	"ONE MOMENT IN TIME"
76	EPSILON CHI OMEGA RECOGNIZES YOUNG WOMEN

FEATURED ARTICLES

25



Bill Plate
CCU

43



Jeannette Glenn
(Retired)

42



Ivy Pope
Pope Furniture

38



Judge Gilleon Frieson
Lake City Municipal Court

25



Frederick James Hamilton D.O.
CHS - Marion

40



Nicole Jones
Spaulding Middle School

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MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

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

Spanish Version

Translated by: Yadira Santiago, MA

NUESTRA MISIÓN

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

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

NUESTRA VISIÓN

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

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FROM THE EDITOR'S HEART

LET'S GET PSYCHED ABOUT NEW POSSIBILITIES THE NEW YEAR BRINGS



Dawn "D.A." Goodwin
Interim Editor

After tackling 2016, it's time to step into a new year full of excitement, optimism and new beginnings. For those of us who witnessed tragedies and shortcomings last year, we must pick ourselves up, shake the dirt off and regain focus on the brightness of the next steps towards our future, which actually begins now! Thank you for starting out with the highly anticipated first quarter issue of Diversity Works Magazine©.

It's almost like experiencing Christmas all over again. When you first picked up your copy, I hope you were filled with anticipation, just as if you were picking up the first Christmas present with your name on it and praying it was exactly what you asked Santa for. Well, this issue is what you want and so much more. It is super inspiring, meticulously organized and full of info to get you pumped about 2017 and beyond. And, don't worry, this magazine isn't like the holiday gathering where the person with no gift to give gets nothing in return. Oh no. We know everyone deserves something special; therefore, we have a little something for everyone.

From the beautiful cover featuring Terry Bess, you get the visual of a powerful woman who exudes confidence and strength. And once you check out her story, you'll get to know exactly why she is so deserving of the title "Trailblazing Woman in Business." What she reveals to you will not only surprise you, but it will also inspire you to strive through obstacles along any beaten paths you must walk in your own life to get to your destined greatness.

We also have articles on Stephanie Rogers-Samuel, who is leading the initiative to teach coding classes at the Florence Career Center; Council woman Peggy Sebnick, who was elected to the District 5 seat of the Lake City Council; and Dr. Nika White, who gives the essentials of thriving as a diversity and inclusion practitioner.

In this issue we also celebrate Black History Month. Visit with Rashawn Aaron of McMillan Head Start as he points out a major crisis in education and Mary Howard of Lake City as she tells us how to bridge that gap in education. We honor Dr. Bill Boyd Sr., the Darlington County School superintendent and Spaulding Middle School Principal Nicole Jones.

For Women's History Month, we have Catherine Miller Harris, Frances Segars Jones, Ivy Pope, Jeannette Glenn, Marguerite Willis and Starlee Alexander who have all put in years of service within their local communities.

You'll find the awe-inspiring Judge Gilleon Frieson and his story of being non biased in an often biased world. He describes his take on the importance of celebrating the life of Dr. King after having done it traditionally for years with plans of continuing the tradition in the future. Reverend Dean Page of Powerhouse Christian Church in Dillon leads by example in promoting racial harmony, and Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church Chris Handley explains how he bridges the racial gap in the community with the support of Helping Florence Flourish (HFF).

Want more related to spirituality? Well, we have that wrapped up in a nice bow for you too. Robin Lewis brings to you "an uncomplicated gospel" that will move you through every situation in life.

Are you looking for fun and excitement too? Keep flipping through for the announcements on local entertainment, including

an upcoming music fest, the upcoming opening of Local Motive Brewery and street pianos being placed across Florence for the public's enjoyment. Speaking of Florence, find out why the city was recognized statewide in 2016 and what its upcoming plans are for advancing forward into another successful year.

There's more. Marc Burt shares how Honda successfully operates by creating an atmosphere of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Then pay close attention to how Gail M. Williams breaks down how organizations should view individuals as opposed to fearing them because of their personal lives. Get ready to learn about replacing individual differences in society by looking at things in "the submarine way" of John Gregory Vincent and Deb Fortin. These two are the co-authors of a new book, and we are here to spread the word.

Stick with us to discover what's going on in area schools. We celebrate Darlington County School District (DCSD) for having the top ranking four-year graduation rates in the state. Find out what other award the district won and which DCSD students were honored at the state fair's art competition. Get tips from Marion's interim superintendent on how to learn beyond the classroom, and meet the new vice president of the virtual engineering program at the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics.

Read on to discover area college news. Dr. Luns C. Richardson's announces his upcoming retirement from his position as the president of Morris College. Then Dr. Henry N. Tisdale describes how Claflin University continues to pursue excellence in diversity. Celebrate with Francis Marion University (FMU) as its online program ranks as one of the state's best, and find out which award Dr. LeRoy "Pete" Peterson Jr. of FMU won. Be sure to check out Lakischi Livingston of Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC), who has been named the state's top administrator. Then FDTC shares how it is rebranding itself and its online presence.

Maybe you're a business owner in search of marketing advice and media help. Inside this issue, you'll find advertising solutions by Cassandra Brown of Streamline Global Media. Also, check out the New Year Resolutions we have to help your company's future growth.

If you're in search of help in bettering your overall lifestyle, you're in the perfect place. Quentin Williams explains how he is "helping people make better financial decisions." We also share which group is at the forefront of the digital banking trend, we tell you all about pension plan funding shortfalls, and we even inform you on how to boost your memory. Also, learn about how Word Weavers fulfills that need for Christian writers who are seeking a group of peers to share writing ideas with.

For the health-conscious reader, we have quite the surprise for you. You'll get the latest updates that dispel myths about dark chocolate and wine, and we give you awesome tips on saving money on healthcare. You'll be informed on how the Chrysalis Center is here for women's rehabilitation and we let you know how you can make cancer screenings easier.

There is still more to uncover in this issue, but you have to keep reading to discover what awaits you. Just know that whether you're looking healthy lifestyle options, school-related announcements or things to do the area, this issue of Diversity Works Magazine© has you covered.

Enjoy, and Happy New Year!

DIVERSE BY 2025: WHY IS TRUE DIVERSITY STILL A CHALLENGE?

Submitted by LaSonya Berry McPherson, Berry & Associates, Inc.



Year after year research has indicated a significant increase in workplace diversity. The 2014 and 2016 study by Oxford Economics and SAP found a 67% increase in the general workforce while higher level leadership levels have seen 40% or less increase. It is no secret that significant and lasting changes generally are driven from the top level of organizations. With the recent media coverage of diversity issues in law enforcement and those with authority, there are growing concerns that are bound to have carryover into the workplace and, more importantly, into the minds of those in leadership who already challenge the need for further focus on diversity in the workplace.

Workplace-Vs-Community

Community concerns and activities have a direct impact on corporations. Surprise! The same people who live in the community also work in the community or relate to what is happening in other communities. These challenges result in the need for diversity sensitivity and awareness for all employees. The elephant in the room is how diverse employees relate what is happening in the community to what they are experiencing at work. Others try to pretend it does not exist or is not true for those they work with in the corporate community. At any rate, there are some challenges that still exist in diversity that seem to be growing.

The Shift

The greatest shift is occurring in generational diversity. Baby Boomers (born between 1946 - 1964) were the largest population until they were succumbed by the Generation Y/Millennials (born between 1982 - 2002). With more than 30 million of the Baby Boomers retiring and preparing to exit mid-level and senior leadership positions, the opportunity for advancement of Generation X (born between 1965 – 1982) and Generation Y is sure to occur. The question is how diverse will this population of leadership be in the coming years. The research indicates not as diverse as it should be despite statistics showing diversity improves financial performance. Data suggests the need for diversity and the benefits of diversity. However, there is still a struggle with achieving true diversity as a strategy across the corporate landscape.

What Now?

We have seen how the reaction to the actions of some in law enforcement has created some positive and not so positive responses. Is there something corporations should consider a lesson learned from what is happening in the communities? There is growing tension in the country to support the need for more inclusion racially, and corporate is not an exception based on the research. Perhaps the momentum for diversity has to be driven from the bottom up to gain the traction needed to have a major impact and mirror the world we live in. But wait. That is already the case. Diverse candidates are largely found in lower-level

jobs.

Diversity challenges are occurring in pay, promotional opportunities and lack of diversity at executive levels and on corporate boards. There is a pay gap between the majority and the minority employees. According to PEW Research Center 2015 results, the average hourly wages for black and Hispanic men were \$15 and \$14, respectively, compared with \$21 for white men to be outpaced by only the Asian men (\$24). In the same research, it was found that pay for Asian and white women (\$18 and \$17, respectively) is higher than those of black and Hispanic women (\$13 and \$12, respectively). Asian and white women were also higher than those of black and Hispanic men. It is safe to say that equal outcomes are not the same as equal opportunity or equal treatment.

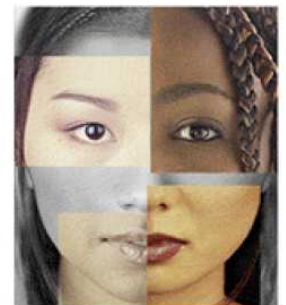
Data and analytics are revolutionizing businesses. Why is this data not making an impact in pay disparity and the lack of diversity at all ranks in the workplace? Why are these results being ignored? The answer seems to be diversity and “inclusion” are needed, according to Intel CEO, Brian Krzanich. It appears the largest impact of inclusion efforts thus far has been on the LBG community from businesses to schools. Sexual preference is another aspect of diversity that has its own challenges as well and needs to be addressed. Not new to the diversity challenge, sexual orientation appears to be making more advancement in equality than others. Are other aspects of diversity now falling to the sideline while the focus is on LGBT?

Action Taken

Some have responded to the difference in treatment of minorities by law enforcement in ways such as the creation of the Black Lives Matters movement. Recently, Colin Kaepernick, 49ers quarterback, refused to stand for the national anthem. Whether you agree with these responses or not, being quiet about disparate treatment of minorities is no longer the answer, and people with influence are using their voices. Perhaps the most recent actions occurring have been quieter in the media but more impactful long term. This action is the decision to support those who support you. Individuals are deciding to work for those who are letting their diversity results speak and show in their workplace. Also, they are spending money with companies that truly support diversity and inclusion. Again I ask, is this approach having an impact across all aspects of diversity (race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, etc.)? Perhaps the data will be available soon to show who the corporations are spending with in every area of diverse suppliers and where all diverse customers are spending as well. What do you think the results will show in 2025?

Challenges & Opportunities of Diversity

- “One of the most important challenges facing modern societies, and at the same time one of our most significant opportunities, is the increase in ethnic and social heterogeneity in virtually all advanced countries”
- “The central challenge for modern, diversifying societies is to create a new, broader sense of ‘we.’”



NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR YOUR BUSINESS



There is still time to execute your New Year Resolution. Rather than pledge to join the gym and workout five times a week, we've put together a list of resolutions that will help your business in 2017.

Take Personal Stock

Every year, you should sit down and take stock of the previous year and all you've done. You should look at what roles you've taken on within the company and determine if you can delegate anything to your employees. It's a great way for you to keep your eye towards growth and the big picture. It will empower your employees,

and free up your time. While empowering your employees, take a larger role within the organization.

Make Time for Yourself

Running a business takes all of your time and then some, but if you don't build time in your day for yourself, to take a breather from the hectic pace, it's easy to burn out and lose your passion. Even if it's only five minutes here and there, be sure to carve out some time this year.

Sharpen the Saw

Keeping your skills current is essential. Whether you're president of a company, restaurant, retailer or salon owner, it's important to try new things to enhance your own professional growth. Try a new menu selection; retail item; or offer a new service to keep your business current. Additionally, talk to your customers about what they want from your business—you should've gotten great feedback from your clients/customers in 2016. Implement many of their suggestions for great success.

Face to Face

It's time to stop relying on email and the phone as an exclusive way to

communicate with customers. Deep and long-lasting business relationships are built IRL (In Real Life).

Invest in Yourself with One New Skill

You know that old saying, "Old dogs can learn new tricks." Many small business owners invest in training for their employees; however, they tend to forget about themselves. Take the time during the year to becoming proficient in an area where you are weak in by acquiring one new skill set for your business.

Organize

Organization is the key to success for any business. Whether it's organizing your finances or your work space, knowing where things are—and where you stand—is a beautiful thing. For example, take five minutes a day to organize your files—paper or electronic—so you know where your paperwork is. It will save you hundreds of hours later when you are looking for something and you know exactly where it is.

Have a Positive Outlook

Running a business can be stressful. It's not easy, and cash flow is usually an issue. In 2017, try not to get bogged down with the negative—focus on the positives: Where you've come, where you're going this year and where you'll be the year after. It will help you focus on the big picture—your business goals.

Once you've focused on what you want to accomplish, your business objectives for 2017 and 2018 will become clear.

Of course, we will always be here to help you with your business goals—in 2017 and beyond.



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SUCCESSFULLY STREAMLINING ADVERTISING SOLUTIONS

Submitted by *Kassandra Brown*



Kassandra Brown

Advertising is the driving force that not only leads customers to your front door, but it also lets potential customers know that your business exists. That is why advertising can be such a challenging task for many business owners because it affects your business plans, which can also affect your business's success.

Kassandra Brown of Streamline Global Media (SGM), a local full-service advertising agency located in Florence said, "I have always had a love and a passion for the creative side

of media ranging from television, radio to graphic design by stretching my imagination in creating new and exciting branding ideas. My love for advertising and broadcasting was ignited and then grew while I was a student at Morris College in Sumter. I never would have imagined that this path would have propelled me on such an amazing and exciting journey."

She also says, "Being a part of an advertising agency allows me to be involved in all aspects of advertising for my clients." Therefore, she strives not to be just a media agent but to also successfully build and maintain lasting advertising and marketing relationships. SGM also strives to provide the highest level of professionalism and expertise by working with each client to customize solutions to meet their specific and individual needs.

Streamline Global Media, specializes in all facets of advertising from television/radio & newspaper advertising placement, to commercial production, logo design, websites, graphic design, billboards, industrial,

internet, instructional and training videos. With over 20 years of experience, SGM is a company that is dedicated to delivering creative advertising, marketing and public relations solutions. At Streamline Global Media, "It is our goal to help 'Make Your Advertising Solutions Simple' for you and your company." For information about our services contact Kassandra Brown at Streamline Global Media at 843-409-2427, on the web at www.streamlineglobalmedia.com or by email at info@streamlineglobalmedia.com.



DIVERSITYWORKS
7th/11th

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion Within Our Communities

In today's environment, how do you increase your business production bottom line? One way is to increase that bottom line by creating that your organization prioritizes Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace.

Diversity Works® Magazine is the Answer!

Founded on Appreciation of One Another, Recognizing the Importance of our Differences and Understanding along with Embracing our Similarities.

You can view copies of Diversity Works® Magazine at www.diversityworkssc.com. For more information on how to become a partner in promoting Diversity and Inclusion in your workplace, call 843-669-5929 or 843-413-2743.



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PROPELLING OTHERS FORWARD BY NEITHER ASKING NOR TELLING

Submitted by Retired CSM Gail M. Williams



CSM Gail M. Williams, Registered X-Ray Technologist, Moncrief Army Community Hospital

SUMTER--Today I discuss my struggle to the top of the enlisted rank and the impact it played on other females, which gave them the drive to move forward. I made history as the first female soldier in the South Carolina Army National Guard to achieve the rank of First Sergeant and Command Sergeant Major. My achievement did not come without prayer, sweat and tears. I had to perform above the standard to measure up to my male counterparts. There were several times when I was overlooked or told I was too young to achieve a position of

greater responsibility, but my male counterpart moved forward. Being the first female of leadership in a male-dominated organization was not easy at all. Organizations must look at the attributes of people regardless of race or gender. And if you do that, women and other minorities will be included. Although the struggle was hard, I remember my mother who often told me that there's nothing too hard for God.

There is no employer in the world that is more diverse than the Armed Forces. A diverse force is more dynamic and able to more easily adapt to the next challenge. In order for an organization to be diverse, it must take in consideration disabilities, culture, race/ethnicity,

socioeconomic status, gender, age, religion and sexual orientation. Service members that are a part of diverse and inclusive units will more easily transition to civilian life, whether that is onto a multifaceted college campus or into corporate America.



Diversity in the workplace is important for employees because it manifests itself in building a great reputation for the company, leading to increased profitability and opportunities for workers.

The actions and timeline that led to "Don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) and the repeal of it were as follows: In 1950, President Truman signed UCMJ (Uniform Code of Military Justice), which set up discharge rules for homosexual service members. President Reagan said, "... homosexuality is incompatible with military service, and anyone engaging in homosexual acts or states that they are homosexual or bisexual are to be discharged." In 1996 President Clinton signed into law the Defense of Marriage Act, which rigidly defines marriage as being between a man and a woman, denying same-sex couples equal protection. President Clinton later introduced "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," indicating the military members should not be asked about their sexual orientation.

In defining the "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, it's the term commonly used for the policy restricting United States military personnel from efforts to discriminate or harass closeted homosexual or bisexual service members or applicants, while barring those who are openly gay, lesbian or bisexual from military service. DADT was created because of a belief that open homosexuality in the military endanger the teamwork, organization and discipline necessary for military efficiency and safety. The problem was there are no studies that prove any detrimental effect from allowing homosexuals to serve in the military. For 17 years, the law prohibited qualified gay and lesbian Americans from serving in the armed forces and sent a message that discrimination was acceptable.

The Armed Forces discriminated against soldiers based on their



sexual orientation until the repeal of "Don't ask, don't tell." Having a diverse military (in education, sex, ethnicity, and socioeconomic background) of service members increases the chances for mission effectiveness by bringing a wider variety of tools to the fight. When young people see military leaders that look like them or have a similar background, it sends the signal that the military is a viable option for them. Instead of looking at a person based on sex, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language ability and education, acknowledge and value them for these differences that can be used to improve mission effectiveness.

Between 1993 and 2011, over 14,000 military men and women were discharged due to their sexual preference. Each discharge cost the US roughly \$50,000. There have been 150,000 people who are transgender who have served in the US armed forces. People who are transgender are not issued the same freedom gay, lesbian and bisexual service members are because of discriminatory medical regulations that label them as mentally unstable.

In 2010, President Obama signed the repeal of DADT, which would enable service members to serve openly without fear of being discharged for their sexual orientation. In 2011, the US lifted the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, which restricted gay, lesbian and bisexuals from openly serving in the military. For the first time in American history, people of every sexual orientation could serve openly and proudly. Because of the repeal of it, no longer will our country be denied the service of thousands of patriotic Americans who were forced to leave the military regardless of their skills, no matter their bravery or their zeal, no matter their years of exemplary performance because they happen to be gay. No longer will tens of thousands of Americans in uniform be asked to live a lie or look over their shoulder in order to serve the country that they love.

In closing, organizations have to look at what the person brings to the organization instead of their personal lives and the fears of how society views them. Diversity not only involves how people perceive themselves but also how they perceive others. A diverse workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing and allocation of resources. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas that are flexible in adapting to fluctuating markets and customer demands. Organizations that encourage diversity in the workplace inspire all of their employees to perform to their highest ability. Diversity training alone is not sufficient for your organization's diversity management plan. A strategy must be created and implemented to create a culture of diversity that permeates every department and function of the organization.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTITIONERS

Submitted by Dr. Nika White, Vice President, Diversity and Inclusion Greenville Chamber



Dr. Nika White

GREENVILLE --The current political climate has many questioning the future for those who are often marginalized. Many diversity and inclusion (D&I) practitioners may even view their role as less significant and threatened as a result of the newly elected commander-in-chief. The work of inclusion is complex enough. Having a President-elect whose actions and words left many feeling vulnerable creates frustration and can compromise the mission of establishing acceptance and equality

for all. What we must ask ourselves now is how can the outcome of this election work in our favor? I believe it's to our benefit if we see the election results as an opportunity. Through this historic election, we have been presented with a chance to work even harder to more effectively shift the paradigm of inclusion from one of obligation to one of opportunity. Some of the best solutions to social complex issues have come as a result of a crisis situation causing many stakeholders to become involved in instituting change. My hope is that, for those of us in the discipline of diversity and inclusion, the election outcome will spark an urgency to refocus. And for those who do not carry the D&I title, my hope for you is that you will also find it necessary to get information to ignite greater inclusion in your respective organization and circles of influence.

Early in my career as a D&I practitioner, one of my mentors (also in the discipline) shared with me that the longevity of a D&I officer is typically around the five-year mark before it's probably time to transition. The notion is that if a D&I officer is effective, he or she has most likely challenged the status quo multiple times, instituted about as much change as the organization can stand, and may have made some people uncomfortable. This often leads to the officer transitioning from the organization (sometimes willfully and other times not). But, in the end, that officer can rest well at night knowing that he or she was effective in making a difference. Diversity and inclusion is all about change and change management. We must ask ourselves as D&I professionals, how do we effectively manage the change and still get the results we seek? Here are four essential practices to not only survive, but to also thrive as a D&I practitioner in today's society post-election:

1. Stop avoiding the leaders who don't believe in the D&I mission. You must find a way to get the skeptics involved in the work. Most often, the reason the skeptics don't see the value of diversity and inclusion is because they view it as activity that will eventually take something away from them. Find a way to seek those leaders out and engage them in the process.

2. Stop shaming, condemning or manipulating leaders to do the work of diversity and inclusion. This will backfire and is counterproductive. Remember, you are trying to shift behaviors and attitudes. You can't guilt someone to do the work of diversity and inclusion without it negatively impacting the outcome. The goal is to get leaders to engage in diversity and inclusion because of, and not in spite of. D&I practitioners have a much better chance of influencing leaders through knowledge, strategic thinking and a strong narrative around the business case for diversity and inclusion.

3. Start treating inclusion as a leadership function. Being inclusion-minded must be treated as a leadership attribute that is not only encouraged, but is also expected. This means that organizations must stop treating the work of D&I as the responsibility of the diversity officer only, but instead as a mandate for every person in the organization. Regardless of your title, if you consider yourself a leader (a person of influence) you must become inclusion-minded and begin to exercise intentionality in doing your individual part in creating an inclusive

environment.

4. Start reminding yourself daily of the "why" behind the work of inclusion. We must renew our commitment to the work so that we can continue to fight the good fight. Leverage small wins to build momentum, but recognize that a single victory is not enough to sustain the work of D&I. Create a series of actions that can help build your confidence, speed and power.

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LAKE CITY ELECTS COUNCILWOMAN PEGGY SEBNICK

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Peggy Sebnick

LAKE CITY -- Lake City is a city located in central South Carolina and sits south of the county seat Florence. Lake City's city government includes a mayor (elected for a four-year term), an appointed city administrator and a six-person city council (elected to single-member districts for a four-year staggered term of office). The job description for city council members varies significantly from city to city, but almost all share basic similarities. Elected officials make decisions to help the city grow and develop while creating opportunities for the

residents of the community.

Councilwoman Peggy Sebnick was elected to the District 5 seat of the city council on November 8, 2016, receiving the majority of the votes. She has also served on the Lake City Planning Commission for over 10 years. The District 5 seat was once filled by another Sebnick: her husband William "Bill" Sebnick, who also served as mayor of Lake City.

Sebnick has been calling Lake City home since 1966 when she and her husband relocated with their five children from the suburbs of Chicago. The family relocated to the south when Sebnick's husband Bill was offered a supervisory position in a small A.B. Dick "satellite" plant in Lake City.

"Busy, busy, busy, A.B. Dick brought metal manufacturing to this rural community where agriculture and textiles were the dominant opportunities for a career. The 'Tech System' was fairly new, and Florence Darlington Tech did training of the employees on site. Local people readily and eagerly learned this new type of work," stated Sebnick.

Sebnick and her husband were instrumental in helping the city of Lake City grow from the moment they called it home. The children were avid competitive swimmers in Illinois however Florence County did not have a facility or organization to support a swim team. When the YMCA in Florence completed construction on the building and pool Bill quickly volunteered to run a swim program at the "Y."

The family lived south of Florence so Bill would take the drive every evening from Lake City to train swimmers. Bill would continue this routine of driving to Florence each evening with competitions all over the state, on weekends, summer and winter for many years.



The team grew and eventually moved to facilities at Francis Marion University, where the Sebnick's oldest daughter assisted her dad teaching the younger swimmers proper techniques. The Florence Area Swim Team, or FAST as they were called, was quite successful over the years; with the youngest two Sebnick children earning swimming scholarships to college. The team was an integral part of S.C. Swimming and the state branch of U.S. Swimming. "Bill and I were both involved in swimming administration and officiating at the state level and I served as the state chairman for three years," Sebnick recalled.

Sebnick and her husband Bill served the community with a sense of civic responsibility of wanting to see concepts and ideas develop while making decisions to help the city as well as the constituents meet their needs: "Both Bill and I have supported citywide cleanups, the S.C. Tobacco Festival, the Chamber of Commerce and various school projects and church activities always with the spirit of service to benefit the community. Lake City is home, we established a family business in 1979, and our two sons maintain a successful operation at Mid-South Metal Specialties along with their wives and several faithful employees, continuing to invest in the economy of the city," stated Sebnick.

Sebnick believes service is a mindset that grows into a lifestyle, one she has lived for 90 years. "I truly believe our God transplanted our family to Lake City and opened doors of opportunity for us all. As long as we are able – and the doors are open – we will continue to serve."

The city of Lake City has a rich history, and with members of the community committed to growth of the city, the future will experience continued growth for generations to come.



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REPLACING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES THE SUBMARINE WAY

Submitted by Deb Fortin



John Gregory Vincent, Workplace Consultant, Gallup

CHARLOTTE, N.C. -- On November 3, 2016, John Gregory Vincent spoke at the Florence Diversity Works training session about his life on submarines and how his years on them introduced and reinforced that focusing on mission and “fighting the submarine” helped to quell biases and improve engagement. During this conference, John talked about the value of having the right people in the room. On diversity counsels in particular, his question, “Do they want your face, or do they want your opinion?”

resonated with the crowd and gained more than a few “Amens” and applause. John’s speech on diversity, the submarine way was based on a book, he and his wife Deb Fortin are co-authoring, titled “Diversity the Submarine Way.” Below are excerpts from John and Deb’s book to be released in June 2017:

Introduction: “When you saw this title, you likely asked yourself, what does diversity and a submarine have in common? Well, everything, as you will learn from this book. The elephant in the room of course is that women weren’t allowed on submarines except as a specialty until 2010. This is true but we had plenty of women on board which I will talk about in chapter II. Imagine you are in a 300 feet, fast attack, 637 class submarine, with 130 men and there’s no privacy. Fast attack is important because it is the smallest submarine. For 130 men there might be some 75-80 bunks. That means when one person gets out of the bunk, another crawls into it before it even cools. That’s why the nickname is a hot rack. Imagine that there is someone who annoys you at work, in your regular job as an account manager or a customer service manager. Your strategy is to avoid this person. Except for the occasional meeting where you have to be in the same room you are successful staying away. Then imagine this same person is on a submarine in 300 feet of cramped space and you are sharing a rack with them, see them multiple times a day, and maybe share a watch with them. How do you think that might go? I will not give away all of the secrets in the introduction but it will probably go well, maybe even better than well. How can that be, you ask? The reality of life on a submarine is not pleasant to say the least. The smell of diesel fuel and body odor is everywhere and the surroundings can shift between petri dish or powder keg, meaning there are the elements of something new and interesting growing, or an explosion is imminent. Depending on the mission, the state of emotion might be borderline fear, or it might be pure boredom where getting from point A to point B is the sole purpose of the next few days. How do you think that might contribute to life on a



submarine? Then there’s superstitions. All sailors are superstitious. Sailors have been dying at sea since the first man put something that



Deb Fortin

could float in the water. In fact, the two dolphins that are on either side of the submarine, the submarine insignia, are there to represent our superstition. The tale is that if there’s a dolphin or two that are jumping in your bow wake underway, it will be a good mission. So why does this completely unpredictable life in cramped space, with few amenities, create lifelong fans of the relationships formed there and life on a submarine, despite massive differences? Well, the secret is in the sauce. Please read on...”

Do it the submarine way-Stick to the plan

“All of us came to the Navy with our duffle bags full of biases and issues. We also came from very different backgrounds. Some of us came from wealthy families where joining the Navy was a great way to punish Mommy and Daddy, and others came because this was their only hope at an education and future. The pair of shoes they put on in basic training was the first brand new pair of shoes they had ever owned. Some of these biases were recognized by the sailors and some of them not, but the minute they went down the hatch and their feet hit the steel deck, the biases and prejudices become irrelevant because they were part of a crew. For those different externally, maybe African American, or from the deep south, or even from NYC like me, a moment is probably spent looking around at the other faces looking back, until someone says, ‘don’t just stand there, the head needs cleaning and there’s work to be done.’ In that moment individual differences fall away and mission and purpose replace it. That is the submarine way.”



“So, why do we struggle so in the larger society with differences? Why do we get hung up on who we love, who we marry, or whose a member of the country club? Well, the answer goes back to our duffle bag full of biases. I heard a wise speaker on diversity say one time, if you have a brain, you have biases. So, the answer to this set of biases, is not whether we have them, or not, but what we do with them. Do we need to act on everything we think or feel, of course not. We have that

evolved frontal lobe to help us cope with the uncomfortable, unusual or different, so then why do we not use it as much as we should? So, exactly what happened when those brand new sailors with their duffle bags full of biases, hit the steel deck and suddenly became part of something larger? Did those biases go away, get shoved to a deep, dark corner or get assimilated into a new order? The answer to all of those questions is no. Biases do not go away and it is not helpful to shove them to a deep, dark corner, and lastly assimilation is not healthy. We do not allow the best of our strengths to emerge if we assimilate. The thing about submarines is every strength is needed, and I mean every.”

So, there you have it, the answer to the submarine way.

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IT'S A WRAP FOR 2016! WHAT'S NEXT?

Submitted by Amanda P. Pope, City Manager's Office Administrator



Mayor Wukela, Octavia Williams-Blake, Teresa Myers, Ervin & Drew Griffin

A quick glance over 2016 indicates a strong momentum for the city of Florence. Downtown continues to bloom with the completion of its first residential properties at Emerson Apartments and Kress Development, a municipal parking deck, new streetscapes, and

continued private investment.

The City is being recognized statewide as a leading municipality and is receiving recognition for its efforts as we proudly came home with our fourth consecutive Municipal Achievement Award from the South Carolina Municipal Association in July 2016.

Partnerships continue to provide growth and opportunity for the community. The City's partnership and the generosity of the Drs. Bruce & Lee Foundation Board allowed for the addition of a community gym on the Barnes Street Recreation campus and the development of a much needed soccer complex on W. Palmetto Street on the property formerly owned by Congressman Ed Young. Both of these projects are currently under construction and have the potential to attract sports enthusiasts from across the nation to Florence for tournament play. Visitors to our area increase revenues through accommodations tax monies and hospitality funds. These funds then provide additional opportunities to advance our community. There are also partnerships with other local agencies designed to move the Florence Community forward such as HopeHealth, PDRTA, McLeod, Francis Marion University, Florence School District One and many others.

The Florence Downtown Development Corporation, www.florencedowntown.com, continues to offer entertainment options for residents and visitors to stay in town on the weekends. It plans an annual calendar filled with fun activities that include a concert series from April – October (Florence After Five, and First Friday), the annual SC Pecan Festival and various other scheduled events throughout the year. This year the City Center Farmers' Market moved to a year-round market and has experienced great success and participation from the community. The City also continues expansion of pedestrian and trail connections within the urban area, promoting walk ability throughout the City of Florence.

The fall of the year brought an unwelcome visit from Hurricane Matthew in October 2016 and redirected many city efforts leaving behind massive storm debris. City staff assumed an emergency response status in the weeks after. Many residents were without power for days, and many streets completely blocked by fallen trees. The cleanup continues, and although an inconvenience, a storm of this impact creates a sense of community that many times demonstrates true colors. It was refreshing to observe the kindness and generosity of people extending themselves to neighbors and even strangers during this challenging time.

What happens next for the city of Florence in 2017? The City will continue progressing with technological advances to maintain communications with our residents. It will continue to reach out to residents through the city's website, www.cityofflorence.com; Facebook, www.facebook.com/cityofflorence; Twitter, [@scflorencecity](https://twitter.com/scflorencecity); and Instagram, [@cityofflorencescand](https://www.instagram.com/cityofflorencescand) will continue to utilize Channel 11 and water bill announcements for those residents who choose to use traditional methods of communication. The City is working hard to

keep the lines of communication open and keep information flowing appropriately.

How do we continue our push from good to great? Florence – Full Life, Full Forward is our new branding that reflects a progressive southern city in the heart of the Pee Dee Region. City staff has also assessed itself internally and shares the following mission statement with its employees and the community on how it will continue to advance forward:

We will utilize proactive means to provide timely, effective and fiscally- responsible municipal services to elevate the quality of life in our city and region. We will accomplish this endeavor by adhering to the core values listed below:

Collaboration – Pursuing the best solution or outcome – thinking “we, not me.” Professionalism – Demonstrating competence, proficiency, and skill, as well as honesty, integrity, and respect.

Ownership – Taking personal responsibility to be engaged, innovative, accountable and receptive in the completion of tasks and assignments.



Emerson Apartments

This mission statement is a commitment developed by a diverse group of city staff to provide focus and guidance in our customer service approach. Employees are evaluated annually using the same criteria. The approach is the same whether on a multi-

million dollar construction project or for a utility service for customers. The mission and core values remain the same and should be channeled at every level.

We will continue striving toward excellence in our endeavors to make Florence a great place to live, work, and play for all. For all. For all means everyone - every race, religion and socioeconomic background. Diversity and inclusion is the key to our continued success in making our city great. “Helping Florence Flourish” is an active movement in Florence that is tackling issues and opening lines of communication to tear down walls that once created division in our community.

So as we begin a new year in 2017 with projects that impact us as a whole such as downtown development, neighborhood redevelopment and continued construction projects that are all intended to improve our quality of life, let's also give weight to the intangibles such as equality, diversity and inclusion. Recognizing individual strengths and embracing our differences will only make us stronger as a community and advance Florence further toward our goal of greatness.



2017 UPDATES FROM THE FLORENCE GREATER CHAMBER



Port of Charleston Reaches Milestone

“The most significant milestone in the history of the Port of Charleston...” That’s what Ports Authority CEO Jim

Newsome said on the passage of Water Infrastructure Improvement for the Nation Act (WIIN). This past weekend, the U.S. Senate passed WIIN. The bill’s passage gives authorization to deepen the Charleston Harbor to 54 feet at the entrance channel and 52 feet in the harbor. Senators Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott both voted for the bill. The \$509 million project will allow the port to stay competitive and accommodate bigger cargo ships.

Tightening Labor Market Impacting Economic Growth in South Carolina

A tightening labor market is expected to keep South Carolina’s economic growth at a slow, steady pace in 2017, and state leaders will need to address a growing skills gap if they want to accelerate that growth. Research economists with the University of South Carolina’s Darla Moore School of Business are predicting continued economic growth for the state in 2017, although at a slower pace than each of the past five years of expansion coming out of the Great Recession. <http://florencesceo.com/features/2016/12/tightening-labor-market-impacting-economic-growth/>

Economic Outlook Luncheon Date is Set

The Greater Florence Chamber Area Economic Outlook Luncheon is set for Thursday, March 30, 2017. The expected crowd of 500 community and area business leaders will hear Kent Caudle speak about issues and growth in Florence County and Mary Stephen Wukela will touch on the progress in the city of Florence. Please mark your calendars to attend at noon in the Florence Civic Center.

Worth Repeating -Street Pianos Return to Florence for 3rd Year

On April 21 “Play Me I’m Yours” will return and remain until May 7, 2017. Pianos will be located throughout Florence and Lake City, available for the public to play and enjoy. The street pianos will be personalized and decorated by local artists. Florence is the only location in the Southeast USA this event will take place.

Nominate Your Small Business For A Small Business Award!

The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce is partnering with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the S.C. Department of Commerce, the South Carolina Small Business Development Centers, SCORE, and the S.C. Manufacturing Extension Partnership to recognize local small business leaders in several categories for the incredible impact they have on our state.

Florence Chamber Announces Keynote Speaker for Fall 2017 Membership Meeting

Lynn Good, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Duke Energy, one of America’s largest electric power companies and a Fortune 500 Company, is scheduled to speak at the Chamber’s Annual Membership Luncheon on November 15, 2017. More information will be forthcoming on tickets and times. The event is to be held at the Florence Civic Center.

Icing Ink joins the Florence Chamber

Icing Ink recently joined the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce and celebrated with a ribbon cutting on Tuesday, December 6 at their location on 3360 W. Palmetto. Icing Ink, owned and operated, by Rebekah Osman is not just a cake shop. Opened initially an upscale cake shop, Icing Ink has expanded its offerings of the last two years to include cupcakes, pastries and the like. It also offers gluten free and no sugar baked goods as well. This small shop decorated in lively colors provides great offerings. So if you are in the mood for a treat, go visit Icing Ink. Contact us at (843) 665-0515.



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MARC BURT: HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY INCREASE INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Submitted by Marc V. Burt



Marc V. Burt

MARYSVILLE, OHIO-- Here are 3 steps to remember as you develop your inclusion and diversity activities:

• Step 1: Build a proper foundation that fits with your footprint and culture.

• Honda's Office of Inclusion & Diversity (OID) is small by design. Honda is very decentralized. We have many companies, all with a certain degree of autonomy. In addition, Honda really believes in the power of the genba. It is a Japanese term, which means the place where value is created. In

manufacturing the genba is the factory floor.

• This structure gives our company great strength by empowering people at the spot, who know the most about a situation, to make decisions. But at the same time, it makes it difficult to act in unison in respect to larger issues like diversity.

• So we tackled this by creating an office that can provide guidance and accountability, while not removing the responsibility from the associates at the spot.

• If associates believe the work belongs to the office, they will disconnect and say, "That's not my job." If there is no oversight and accountability, the work will not be prioritized, and there may not be buy-in. And once this happens, progress stops.

• Here is the structure that seems to work for us:

• We created subcommittees to be functional experts around each of our seven focus areas. They are Employment, Procurement, Dealer Representation, Advertising & Marketing, Financial Services, Communication and Philanthropy. Each subcommittee is led by a well-respected expert in that functional discipline. The subcommittee members are the manager level practitioners at each of our major companies.

• The major responsibility of the subcommittees is to execute functional goals and strategies as directed by the Diversity Steering Committee.

• The Diversity Steering Committee creates the overall direction and strategy. It clears the path and provides the authority, and then OID works with subcommittee leaders to implement strategy and to be catalysts for change.

• And we are doing so by showing our associates at all levels of the company how this thought process benefits them. We want to show them how being inclusive can improve their daily operation or area.

• It's important to note that our approach is about changing mindsets, and we realize this will not happen overnight. It's not about putting a poster up or lip service to us. More than 70 percent of our associates work in manufacturing, which tends to be old school and slow to change. We want the 25-year veteran in our welding department to understand, as readily as someone in our corporate office, why working with people of different perspectives and backgrounds will add value.



• Step 2: Build a strategy, both short term and long term

• Any change begins with leadership. Strong leadership is the common ingredient in a successful inclusion and diversity strategy. And it costs nothing. You need to determine how you will engage, energize and push leadership to act. Having an internal I&D council is a start... but not the entire answer.

• An inclusive workplace is everyone's job and should be modeled by leadership:

• Every project starts with a leader putting a team together. As leaders of your companies, every time you create that list are you asking yourself, "Is this a list everyone would want to be on?" If yes, then ask yourself, "Is the list diverse?" If it is not, just stop!

• Don't hit send without doing everything within your power to make it diverse because success starts with diverse ideas.

• To do otherwise is perpetuating the problem. It's one less opportunity to do what is right.



• Leadership will set strategy, but it will not do the work. Determine who will do the work and how they will know specifically what to do.

• When the subcommittee structure is working well. It creates a virtual army of people who are doing the work. They are the at-the-spot champions for change, creating accountability for change in their functional area.

• Determine what your culture is and how the I&D work will become part of your culture. When strategy pushes against culture, culture wins every time!

• Knowing when the time is right for a new initiative is a bit intuitive. It's a little bit of trial and error and testing of the waters.

• Even if your sense that the culture isn't ready to accept the change, you can still plan the strategy.

• Having an executive who champions the cause is essential to influencing the culture. Leaders have great power in influencing the culture.

• There is no substitute for having leadership buy-in.

• Clearly define the metrics. What are the understandable areas of focus? How will you measure success?

• You have to convince people that you're going somewhere in order to build and maintain credibility.

• Develop and share the short and long term strategy so that people don't think you're meandering. Map out your journey and share it.

• Honda is using a 3-step strategy. Each step builds on the previous steps and is ongoing.

• Externally motivated to be internally driven (Leadership driven)

• Diversity Part of the Business Plan

• Diversity Training

• Building on our momentum (Committee driven)

• Local Diversity Committees

• Structural evolution

• Internal & External Communication and outreach

• Driving inclusion at all levels (Associate driven)

• Employee Resource Groups

• Diversity Mentoring Programs

• Honda strives to be a company that society wants to exist. In alignment with that philosophy, Honda has a number of programs, both internal and external, to assist us in continuing to build a diverse and inclusive workplace in North America.

CONT'D MARC BURT: HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY INCREASE INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY



- For the purposes of this discussion, I've put our programs into groups based on the themes:

- The first theme is Business Relations – These are programs that we've developed to ensure that diverse companies have equal opportunity to do business with Honda.

- Honda Partnership Network – Now in its second year, the network is focused on supplier diversity. It is a match making event where Honda makes the effort in advance to put together companies that have the potential to fit. It's kind of like

e-Harmony.com but for automotive companies.

- Over the past several years we have grown our supply chain to include more than 2,000 diverse companies, Tier 2 or below. These suppliers already are helping us create and deliver high quality products every day throughout North America. Honda just recently became part of the \$3 billion roundtable, which is the amount we spend with diverse suppliers.

- The second theme is Associate Development

- LAMP - Honda's Leadership Advancement Mentoring Program (LAMP) just completed its third class with the goal of developing the pipeline of talent. The company is already seeing results. A large number of those ethnic minorities, women and other mid-level associates who have participated in the program are achieving promotions and/or additional job responsibilities.

- Axiom- Modeled after the NFL Rooney Rule, it ensures that diverse associates are being considered in hiring decisions, promotions and opportunities.

- The final theme of programs is dedicated to nurturing the workforce of the future

- Honda has a long-standing relationship with the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) through the Honda Campus All-Star Challenge and Honda Battle of the Bands. This gives the company the opportunity to interact with tomorrow's leaders.

- Hispanic Scholarship Program. Each year we give scholarships to about 16 outstanding Latino undergraduate students from around the country and invite them to our North American site in Ohio to network and tour the manufacturing facility.

• Step 3: Effectively tell the Story

- Narrative contributes to culture.

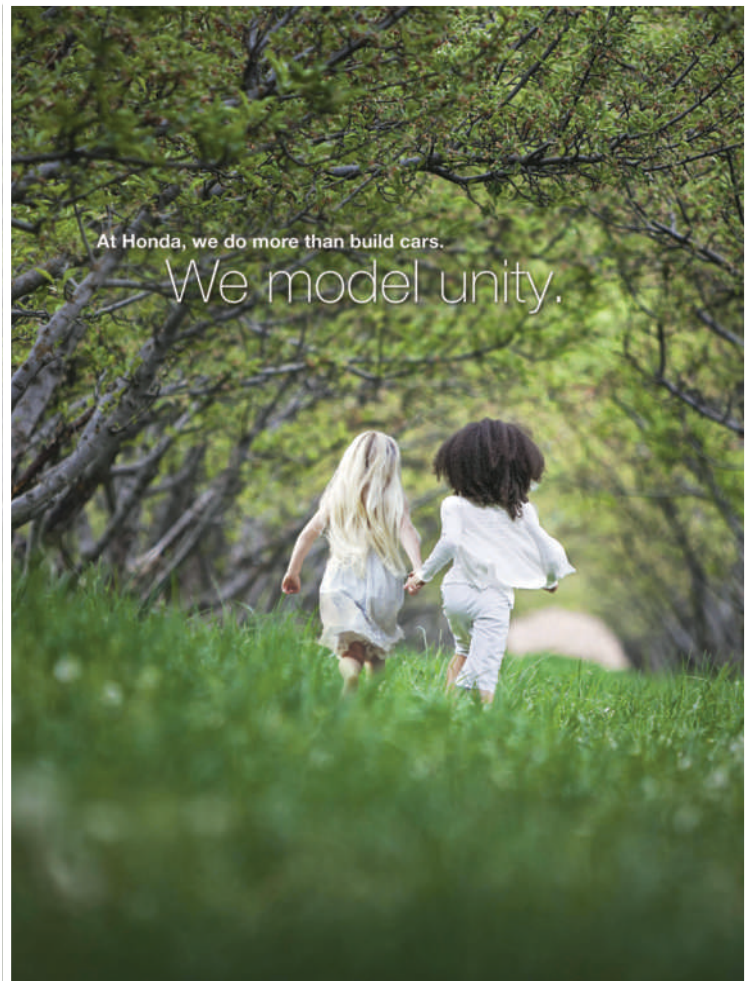
- Honda is a philosophy driven company. Our founder is revered. He was way ahead of his time in understanding the importance of inclusion. He spoke about the need for different thinking to fuel innovation.

- To me, this suggests that our culture was right. But in the complex society of America, we weren't living it. The role of the OID ... and my focus and effort ... is to make this happen.

- We try to include our corporate communications professionals inside your inner circle.

- We created an annual event, an Inclusion Summit, for driving the narrative within our organization. The Inclusion Summit is an internal meeting of the Honda North America Diversity Committee, where departments share their progress toward meeting the goal of increasing inclusion and diversity. We want people to understand that they all have a part in making us better.

- One of my favorite quotes is from Howard Thurman: "There is something in every one of you that waits and listens for the sound of the genuine in yourself. It is the only true guide you will ever have." I think this applies to every one of us.



Like members of a family or instruments in a symphony, we're each unique, and we all have a place together. The sum of our lives and the joining of our experiences make Honda everything it is.

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CREATING DESIRABLE JOBS BY GETTING BACK TO THE BASICS



When it comes to hiring and retaining employees, companies are always looking at new alternatives to build their staffs. However, new research shows that when it comes to attracting top talent, many professionals prefer a return to the basics, meaning stable employment, where competitive base pay with traditional medical and retirement benefits are key.

Predictability over perks

Employees responded resoundingly that they wanted their work life to be more in line with those of the generations before. 81 percent of survey respondents said they would like to work a single, full-time job as opposed to contract work or several smaller positions. This desire rang especially true with millennials as 91 percent of those surveyed agreed.

Respondents also preferred going to the office every day (22 percent) compared to working from remotely full-time (18 percent). Millennials, in particular, were more likely to seek a job where they had to be in the office each day (27 percent).

Stable jobs were valued by 84 percent of survey respondents, while only 16 percent said they preferred a job that may come with riskier employment opportunities.

Employers looking to stay the course

For employers looking to attract and retain top talent, they should focus on solidifying their existing benefits package. A competitive salary remained the most important benefit employees consider in an employer, but traditional offerings such as medical/dental coverage, paid time off and retirement plans were heavily favored over newer perks, including onsite food, wellness offerings and day care.

Employers also don't need to look at making dramatic changes to their existing organizational structure to attract employees. 36 percent said they prefer working for a single manager, while 18 percent said they appreciated the opportunity to report to multiple managers. However, no matter how employers establish their hierarchy, they should always be looking for ways to give employees a chance to impact company decisions. 56 percent said they prefer a job with "authority to make decisions that impact the entire organization," a sign employees care deeply about where they work and want to have a vital role in its growth.

Employees seizing what they want

For employees looking for new positions, the job market is healthier, and those with the right skills and attributes will have their pick of positions. As we move further away from the recession years and the economy improves, those who can afford to take their time in their job search are most likely to find a position offering the things most important to them.

Survey results show us that businesses today need to be good employers, offering stable employment with competitive base pay and traditional medical and retirement benefits. The average American worker isn't necessarily looking for all the bells and whistles.

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AN UNCOMPLICATED GOSPEL FOR EVERY SITUATION

by Robin Lewis



HEMINGWAY--A coaching client recently described to me how she wanted to live her life. She said, "I think the Gospel comes down to this: love and honor God, love and honor yourself, and love and honor others."

Mankind has always been excellent at creating laws, traditions, and culture that elevated the value and power of some while putting down and reducing the value and power of others. We have excelled at separating parts of humanity by age, race and religion, plus a long list of other characteristics and differences in an effort to raise our own self esteem and personal value. Everyone wants to feel important and accepted and some have gone to great lengths to create their own significance through self-elevation, accomplishment or prejudice - ways that truly only provide a short-term solution. In short, we don't treat God, ourselves or others the way the Bible teaches.

A Story with a Surprise Ending



In Luke 10:25-37, a very proud man who came to Jesus to boast about how he had kept all of the Law, tested him with a question:

One day an expert in religious law stood up to test Jesus by asking him this question: "Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?"

The man answered, "You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all

your soul, all your strength, and all your mind.' And, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"Right!" Jesus told him. "Do this and you will live!"

The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In the verses that follow, Jesus helps this young egotist come to understand who his neighbor really is in what we know as "The Story of the Good Samaritan." Essentially, every character in the story should have stopped to help the one in trouble, but they were indifferent, prideful, too busy or were jaded by prejudice and hate. Finally, a Samaritan, one who was considered to be of far less value in that culture, stopped to help the one who had been attacked, robbed and wounded. Jesus made his point.

I believe our culture is struggling through the next level of transition in removing walls that divide and in learning how to welcome those who are different. We need to know and understand who our neighbor is. I think my client has it right; this Gospel works for every situation.

- Love and honor God
- Love and honor yourself

- Love and honor others

While this is simple and uncomplicated, it's not easy to live out, especially for those of us who have active prejudices and faulty significance in our hearts. Even lingering threads of seeing others as less than ourselves must be dealt with. Removing wrong mindsets requires self-introspection followed by the work of renewing the mind. (A life coach can help!) We must face our own faults and stop wanting and expecting others to be like us, and instead come to appreciate each individual as a unique creation of God made in his image.



Practice What We Preach



We must become more than hearers of the Word, but must become doers. In James 1:22-25 we read: "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says...for whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do."

When we hear, learn and agree about things like justice, fairness and diversity, then we must begin to practice it. It's not merely what we say, but the way we live our lives that brings change. To practice diversity we must be intentional. Attend a church that is a different denomination or race. Invite someone different to worship with you. Build relationships with people you usually wouldn't hang out with by inviting them to lunch. Look for ways you can be a caring neighbor to those around you in business and personal circles.

These are simple ways to practice what you preach. It requires seeing others as valuable as yourself and treating them with love and respect. And if we want the world to change, if we want our culture to be different, then we must accept our own responsibility in bringing that change about. Stephen Covey said, "Strength lies in differences, not in similarities."



Whether you're practicing diversity, standing for justice or helping someone in need, step out of your comfort zone and live an uncomplicated gospel of love and honor. Learn to see everyone around you as your neighbor, your equal. Take action, use your voice and

be kind.

"Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked?" Jesus asked.

The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy."

Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same (without prejudice or condemning judgment, and with love and honor)" (Luke 10:36-37).

Robin Lewis is a professional speaker and certified women's life coach who believes every person is a powerful history maker created to live a life of intentional purpose. You can contact Robin by email at robinlewiswords@gmail.com and visit her website at www.robinlewislife.com.

DCSD TRANSFORMS INITIATIVE EARNS PRESTIGIOUS TIPS AWARD

Articles submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist



The South Carolina Association for Educational Technology (SCAET) bestowed a District Technology Innovative Programs Award to members of the Darlington County School District's Technology team during SCAET's S.C. EdTech Conference on Nov. 3 in Myrtle Beach.

MYRTLE BEACH--The Darlington County School District's #DCSDTransforms initiative received a District Technology Innovative Programs (TIPs) Award recently from the South Carolina Association for Educational Technology (SCAET) during the S.C. EdTech 2016 Awards Ceremony and Luncheon.

The #DCSDTransforms program was born to address the district's intention to ensure every student has access to digital resources to truly transform teaching and learning. Every student in the district will have a personal computing device by next year. The #DCSDTransforms initiative uses innovative strategies to provide professional development that models new instructional strategies, provides requisite technical knowledge and serves to create a culture with a risk-taking, growth mindset.

SCAET recognizes outstanding programs and activities in the state that showcase innovative uses of technology in education. The TIPs Award was established in an effort to honor those best practices. This program acknowledges South Carolina schools or districts as having exhibited excellence in the integration of technology in

education.

"We are so excited that our technology program is recognized as one of the most innovative programs in the state," said Diane Sigmon, director of technology. "Through the opportunities that technology provides, students are engaged and excited about learning. This award recognizes the efforts of everyone in Darlington County School District – the teachers who are working so hard to learn about new tools for their classrooms, the administrators who are working to develop new skill sets to lead this transformation, the technical staff who work to ensure that everything functions as it needs to, and the students who continue to inspire us. We are also incredibly fortunate to have a board of education with a vision and determination to implement that vision."

EdTech, South Carolina's premier educational technology conference, is designed to promote the use of educational technology to enhance student learning. The mission of EdTech is to bring educators, administrators, technology professionals, college faculty and staff, public and academic librarians, business and industry trainers, industry representatives and policy makers together to think, discuss, listen and learn the best strategies to plan for, implement and use educational technology in our schools.

The S.C. EdTech conference is planned and delivered by SCAET, represented by multiple South Carolina partners that include K-12, higher education, state government agencies and telecommunications business partners. Partner members of SCAET this year included the S.C. State Department of Education, S.C. Educational Television, Division of Technology – S.C. Department of Administration, AT&T, School District of Pickens County, Meridian IT Inc., Kershaw County School District, Dillon School District Four, University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science and College of Charleston School of Education.

DARLINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1 IN GRADUATION RATE IN SC

DARLINGTON-- Darlington County School District (DCSD) ranked No. 1 in four-year graduation rate in South Carolina in 2016, according to data released today by the S.C. Department of Education (SCDE).

DCSD students graduated at a rate of 94.5 percent, an increase of more than 2 percent from 2015. The state average was 82.6 percent. Within DCSD, Mayo High School for Math, Science and Technology again posted a 100 percent graduation rate. Lamar High School's graduation rate was 98.3 percent, Darlington High School's rate was 95.1 percent, and Hartsville High School's rate was 91.5 percent. Darlington High saw an increase to its graduate rate of nearly 4 percent, while Hartsville High's rate rose by nearly 3 percent.

The data came as part of the SCDE's release of 2015-16 state report cards for schools and districts. The layouts for this year's report cards have received an extensive overhaul from last year in order to provide the public a modern and streamlined dashboard of information, according to SCDE.

Report cards are designed to provide a progress report on how schools and districts are performing on the World Class Knowledge, Skills and Characteristics outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate and are reported through test score measures that indicate readiness for college using the ACT, SAT, End of Course Tests and readiness for careers using WorkKeys. The SC READY tests in grades 3-8 are also aligned to show student readiness for the college entrance tests they will ultimately take in high school.

The new report cards also highlight a multitude of opportunities

provided to students at each grade level, such as advanced placement, International Baccalaureate and dual credit participation. Report cards also provide vital information to the business community by showing the number of students enrolled in career and technical courses, the number of students who have earned an industry certification and the students who participated in an apprenticeship or work based learning opportunity.

Pursuant to South Carolina's Act 200, report card ratings for both districts and schools are suspended for two years, in 2015 and 2016. Districts and schools will receive report cards under a new accountability system for the 2016-17 school year, which will be released in the fall of 2017.

You can find the state report cards for DCSD and its schools at <http://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/state-report-cards/2016/>.



GSSM ANNOUNCES NEW VP OF VIRTUAL ENGINEERING PROGRAM

Submitted by Lauren Shirley, PR & Marketing Coordinator



Dr. Ershela Sims

HARTSVILLE— The South Carolina Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Ershela Sims to the position of Vice President for Accelerate Engineering, GSSM’s statewide virtual engineering program. Sims will formally join the GSSM administrative team in March 2017 and will bring with her a wealth of experience in the areas of engineering, curriculum and distance education.

“We are delighted to welcome Dr. Sims to the GSSM community,” GSSM President Dr. Hector Flores said in his comments to staff. “Her strong academic research background and her experience with program building at a school similar in mission to ours are a great fit for GSSM. We are fortunate to have her join us soon.”

Sims is currently Dean of Engineering and Technology at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics (NCSSM) where she is responsible for developing the mission of the Engineering and Computer Science programs, as well as the school’s Fabrication and Innovation Lab. During her tenure, Sims has developed and taught courses in Electrical Engineering, Engineering Research, Statics and Biomedical Instrumentation. She also developed the engineering curricula used in the school’s distance programs and was a lead developer for biomedical engineering curriculum for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Sims holds a BSE in Biomedical Engineering from Duke University, a PhD in Biomedical Engineering from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in biomechanics in the Department of Surgery at Duke University, investigating the gait mechanics associated with osteoarthritis of the knee. She has

taught anatomy courses at Duke University Medical School and served as Assistant Director at the Duke-UNC Brain Imaging and Analysis Center. She has published numerous manuscripts on biomechanics. Prior to her academic career, Sims was a software developer and technical architect at Nortel Networks. She is a recipient of the National Society of Black Engineers Dr. Janice A. Lumpkin Educator of the Year award and co-recipient of the National Science Teachers Associate Vernier Technology Award.

Sims replaces Dr. Karen Den Braven, who is retiring from GSSM after having successfully led the Accelerate program since 2013 through significant growth and program development.

“We celebrate the leadership and hard work of Dr. Den Braven and look forward to partnering with Dr. Sims on future Accelerate innovations,” said Kim Bowman, CEO of the GSSM Foundation. “Both the General Assembly and engineering companies across our state and beyond have generously invested in Accelerate’s long-term strategy of developing talented, creative engineers to help guide our great state forward.”

About GSSM

The South Carolina Governor’s School for Science and Mathematics (GSSM) is a two-year, public, residential high school in Hartsville, SC, specializing in the advanced study of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), with a unique emphasis on economics and entrepreneurship.

GSSM’s residential program can serve as many as 288 high school juniors and seniors annually from across the state. In addition, the school impacts more than 10,000 students and teachers each year through its innovative outreach and virtual programs. Learn more by visiting www.scgssm.org.



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FSD1 BOARD MEMBERS EARN RECOGNITION

Articles submitted by Pamela Little-McDaniel, Florence School District One Director of Public Information

Three Florence One Board Members have earned recognition by the South Carolina School Boards Association (SCSBA) for achievement in the association's 2015–2016 Boardmanship Institute.

The Institute offers a year-round training curriculum to help board members develop skills and stay abreast of state and national education issues. Workshops focus on school law, advocacy and legislation, improving board operations, leadership for improving student achievement and other timely topics.



Trisha C. Caulder



Brian Chapman



Barry Townsend

Board members can achieve up to six levels of recognition by earning points that are accrued annually from July through June for participation in statewide conferences and training provided onsite in their district.

Board members recognized and their levels of achievement are:

- **Trisha C. Caulder** reached Level Four by earning 200 points within four consecutive years or less. Level Four recipients receive a certificate and pin with a blue stone.

- **Brian Chapman** reached Level Two by earning 40 points within one year. Level Two recipients receive a certificate and silver pin.

- **Barry Townsend** reached Level One by earning 25 points within one year. Level One recipients receive a certificate.

SCSBA is the statewide professional organization serving as a source of information, training and advocacy for the state's 81 school district boards, county boards and state special schools.

WILSON STUDENTS SERVE AS READING BUDDIES



Wilson High students

Wilson High students read to Timrod Elementary classes as a part of the "Read to Succeed Program." In keeping with South Carolina's Comprehensive Reading Reform Policy (ACT 284 Read to Succeed/R2S), Carrie Simmons, literacy coach at Timrod, initiated a Read-to-Succeed Reading Buddies Program to assist students in reading. In partnerships with Francis Marion University's softball team, retired veteran teachers and Wilson High School students, Timrod's students are receiving state-required Tier II and Tier III intervention services and support from a combination of highly-effective partners. These partnerships serve as an additional resource to promote literacy beyond the classroom for Timrod's students.

FOCUS ON TEACHING AND LEARNING: DID YOU KNOW?



Florence One will work to improve Instruction through an emphasis on Early Childhood, Literacy, Mathematics and Technology in the New Year.



International Baccalaureate Program Student Applications for 2017-2018



Applications are available beginning January, 2017

Middle Years Program

Williams Middle School (Grades 7-8)
Wilson High School (Grades 9-10)
and

Diploma Program

Wilson High School (Grades 11-12)

Informational Meeting, Wilson High, January 30th, 6:00 p.m.

Showcase Open House, Williams Middle, February 7th, 6:00 p.m.

Applications are available at <https://www.fsd1.org/ib/Pages/default.aspx> or at <https://www.fsd1.org/schools/williams/ibmiddle/Pages/IBApplication.aspx>

Completed Application are due by February 24, 2017

For more information, call Christy Bishop (CBishop@fsd1.org) at Williams Middle or Josie Stratton (Josie.Stratton@fsd1.org) at Wilson High.

EXTENDING THE CCU BRAND BEYOND SOUTH CAROLINA

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Bill Plate, Jr.

CONWAY--The Office of University Communication at Coastal Carolina University is responsible for building internal alignment and external support by telling the University's story to the outside world; defining and building the brand; and coordinating the provision of useful and timely information to the University community in Conway and beyond.

Bill Plate is the vice president of University Communication at CCU. He oversees the areas of marketing, branding, licensing, trademarks, public and media relations and creative services. Plate has been employed with CCU for four years; prior to relocating to South Carolina, he worked for Florida Atlantic University in South Florida.

Plate develops and implements marketing plans, strategic communications and other public relations initiatives to enhance the reputation and awareness among prospective students, faculty and staff; advances strategic goals and objectives; and strengthens support for the University and its mission.

Plate and his team are telling the story of CCU as it unfolds by utilizing social media

platforms to engage and inform the public and employing unique strategies to market the University's brand.

"An interesting thing that we have started to do is look at unique opportunities to tie our logo in with current trends," Plate said. "One of the things you may have seen in market was a 'Star Wars' shirt with a CCU logo. We currently have CCU 'ugly holiday' sweaters, and we have a co-brand shirt with Marvel Comics that features Marvel characters with the Chanticleer, our mascot."

"We also utilize our social media platforms to communicate about new merchandise and where to find it. Each 'Teal Tuesday,' we feature products or a retailer to inform our engaged audience about where they can get CCU-branded merchandise."

Coastal Carolina is always looking to expand its product offerings, and since the inception of a licensing agreement with Learfield Licensing Partners, Plate's marketing and licensing team has worked to ensure it is licensing vendors who offer quality CCU-branded products that meet the University's standards.

Shoppers can find Coastal Carolina merchandise in national retailers like Wal-Mart, Target, Costco, Lids, Cracker Barrel and Dick's Sporting Goods, to name a few, and the

University is always looking for new opportunities to expand its merchandise into other outlets.

As Coastal Carolina athletics transitions to the Sun Belt conference for the 2016-2017 season, the tagline "Coastal Rising" has been incorporated into a graphic that includes the Chanticleer mascot logo and the Sun Belt's logo to help usher in the new era for athletics while gaining continued exposure.

CCU and the Chanticleer are gaining recognition exponentially in all 50 states and internationally because of the University's athletic success and strong academic programs. The successes of Coastal students in the classroom and on the field have increased the demand for official CCU-licensed merchandise. "Our licensed vendors work very hard to make sure merchandise is obtainable no matter where you live, so whether you visit a national retailer like Amazon or Fanatics, or the online Chanticleer Bookstore, or one of our custom sites like goccugear.com and ccuchamps.com, you will be able to purchase CCU gear," Plate said.

Plate also encourages consumers who can't find CCU gear at a certain retailer, whether in South Carolina or in another state, to speak with the retailer's managers and ask them to offer CCU gear.

Game Day HoliDay Every Day...



Show Your Chanticleer Pride



coastal.edu/licensing/currentretailers

DR. LUNS C. RICHARDSON ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT PLANS

Submitted by Anika V. Cobb, Director of Public Relations



Dr. Luns C. Richardson

SUMTER--South Carolina's longest sitting college president and the United Negro College Fund's (UNCF) longest member president, Dr. Luns C. Richardson, informed the board of trustees at its fall meeting on October 29, 2016 of his decision to retire as the president of Morris College. Effective June 30, 2017, he will conclude a remarkable and distinguished career of 43 years of excellent leadership, dedicated service to higher education at the institution, as well as the state and nation.

After June 30 the board will name an interim president as well as begin the process to select the tenth president of Morris College.

Since being elected the college's ninth president in 1974, Richardson has worked tirelessly to maintain financial stability, increase student enrollment, initiate new academic majors, organize divisions, secure accreditation of academic programs, expand the college's technological infrastructure and establish an Army ROTC unit (under the auspices of the University of South Carolina, Columbia). Under his leadership, Morris College was the only historically black institution selected among eight pilot schools to participate in the development of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' (SACSCOCS) new Principles of Accreditation.

In December 1978 the college was accredited by SACSCOCS. In January 1982 the college was accepted into the United Negro College Fund as a member institution. In January 2010 the college received, for the first time in history, its largest, most generous individual gift of \$10 million from Dr. Solomon Jackson Jr.

Other accomplishments include: upgrading full-time faculty to

72 percent holding earned doctorate degrees, increasing the annual operating budget to more than \$21 million, increasing the college's total assets to more than \$60 million, constructing 18 new buildings, and renovating and expanding of all other buildings.

Richardson holds membership in numerous professional, religious and fraternal organizations, including numerous positions with SACSCOS and UNCF. After 56 years as pastor of Thankful Baptist Church (Bamberg) he retired with the title Pastor Emeritus and will hold the same honor with Morris College as President Emeritus. The institution has been extremely fortunate to have had the continuity of his dynamic leadership.

Morris College is an accredited four-year, coeducational, residential, liberal arts and career-focused institution, awarding baccalaureate degrees in the arts and sciences and in career-based professional fields. Founded in 1908, it is owned and operated by the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina. Additional information about Morris College is available at www.morris.edu



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FLORENCE-DARLINGTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE'S LAKISCHI LIVINGSTON NAMED TOP ADMINISTRATOR

Articles submitted by FDTC



Lakischi Livingston

One of Florence-Darlington Technical College's administrative assistants recently was named as the state's top administrators by a state organization. At the South Carolina Association for Higher Continuing Education (SCAHCE) conference during the first week of October, Lakischi Livingston was given the Outstanding Continuing Education Support Staff Award.

Livingston is the Evening Administrative Specialist for Continuing Education at the college and is a 12-year veteran at FDTC. Livingston came to FDTC in 2004 after

graduating with an Associate's Degree in Public Safety from the college. While she was a student, Livingston was a work-study student in the Enrollment Management Department.

Before coming to FDTC, Livingston worked briefly at Coca-Cola Bottling of Florence and Blue Cross Blue Shield, also in Florence.

SCAHCE is a statewide professional organization made up of the Continuing Education staff members who serve at the state's 16 technical colleges. Livingston was picked from a group of three finalists for the award. This is a statewide award, and Livingston was chosen from three finalists.

FDTC'S ONLINE COLLEGE CONTINUES ITS REBRANDING INTO THE NEW YEAR



The South Carolina Virtual College of FDTC launches new website, scvc.fdtc.edu.

The South Carolina Virtual College of FDTC (SCVC) launches a new website along with its rebranding.

The website, scvc.fdtc.edu was launched just prior to the Thanksgiving holiday with the goal to better assist students with their online needs. During any given semester, 35-40 percent of the student population at the college is taking online courses.

"The main reason why we developed the SC Virtual College of FDTC website, was to support student success here at the college," said Director of the SC Virtual College of FDTC, Derk Riechers. "This website has a student-center design which allows for easy navigation to different links and pages. For instance, under the Apply Link, there are many great resources to help a student get started with their educational journey at FDTC!"

FDTC was the first college in the state of South Carolina to offer complete programs online. The program was originally launched in the

mid-90s. The Online College successfully rebranded itself to SCVC during the summer of 2016.

Students choose the SCVC for their educational needs because it's affordable, it can fit into nearly any schedule and there's always student support.

Spring registration is currently underway at FDTC. SCVC offers a wide variety of online classes for its students. Visit Admissions in Room 100 in the 100 Building or call 843-661-8324.

SCVC is located in Room 5217 of the main campus' 5000 Building. For more information on the SCVC, please contact Derk Riechers or Lamar Younginer:

Derk Riechers, Director,
SC Virtual College of FDTC
843-661-8061
Derk.Riechers@fdtc.edu

Lamar Younginer
Online College
843-661-8117
Lamar.Younginer@fdtc.edu

You can also like the South Carolina Virtual College of FDTC, or you can follow @FDTCOnline on Twitter and Instagram.

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Mr. Alphonso Bradley, Director

TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO TEACH TECHNOLOGY IN LOCAL SCHOOL

by Les Echols



Stephanie Rogers-Samuel

The value of an education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), has become highly coveted for the next generation of diverse leaders that will compose our workforce. Educators like Stephanie Rogers-Samuel, a business and coding instructor at Florence Career Center, have become key people in moving STEM initiatives forward. This Florence Career Center course offers a coding class, which, according to Samuel, “helps improve STEM aptitudes and offer design thinking into the 21st century competency.” Samuel has been

a CATE teacher at Florence Career Center for the last two years.

In the course, students learn applications, robotics, digital divide, animation, gaming and utilizing the Java language. The course helps students develop critical thinking, logic and problem solving skills relevant to today’s technology. This course of study is designed to allow students to explore a new type of literacy to improve educational equity. As instructor, Samuel is at the forefront of this growth and inclusion: “With this world becoming so technologically savvy, my hope for the youth of today is to leave as tech-ready high school graduates able to get into a college with unlimited aspirations of becoming the next Bill Gates or Mark Zuckerberg, founders of Microsoft and Facebook respectively. While most individuals have basic knowledge from utilizing their apps on their phone, I truly have loved the extensive knowledge I have gained from coding. It is rewarding to see my students’ discovery of something they have created,” said Samuel.

Samuel also spoke highly of the potential that coding will bring to students locally and regionally. “In the future, coding is going to be paramount with careers for students that love technology. Computers and technology are today, and will continue to be, instrumental in creating, designing and sketching future inventions. I hope to see a Florence Code

Academy become a part of Florence School District One with partnerships in the community that will allow students to grow with technology,” concluded Samuel.

Samuel has an extensive educational background that make her a perfect fit, having earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration from Limestone College in Gaffney and a master’s in human resources development and management from Webster University. She is currently pursuing a master’s in education technology. Originally from Marion, she is married to Robert Edward Samuel from Timmonsville, and they have two daughters, Turksha S. Green and Madison E. Samuel, who is a 3rd grader at Delmae Heights Elementary School, and two grandchildren, Brandon and Bria Samuel, who are currently serving our country in the Air Force.



Samuels with student (Photos by Madison Becker a student at South Florence High School.)

Asked what motivated her and makes her so passionate about education, Samuel explained, “My mother has been in education for over 45 years, and she was always encouraging me to go into education. After I had my daughter, it really hit home for me to become an educator and develop my motto as an educator: ‘Be somebody YOU would be proud to know.’ I had trailblazers who

guided me, and now I want to be an inspiration for others.”

Samuel said she will continue looking forward to this class becoming a great opportunity for students to get unique skills that will help ensure them a promising and rewarding career in the future. “My sincerest gratitude to FCC Director Bradley and staff for allowing me this opportunity,” said Samuel.

NEW HEALTHCARE ADMIN DEGREE FLOURISHING AT FMU

Submitted by FMU

New academic programs typically require a crawl-walk-run phase as they ramp up and become a full-fledged major. Francis Marion University’s new healthcare administration major isn’t typical. The inaugural graduating class, which marched Saturday in FMU’s Fall 2016 commencement, boasts 27 students. That’s third most in any major among the more than 300 graduates at this fall’s commencement, and there are 113 additional students in the program, set to graduate over the next few years.

That’s quite a feat for a program that’s less than a year old, but it’s not surprising to Dr. Ruth Wittmann-Price, Dean of FMU’s School of Health Sciences. Students are migrating to the new major because it’s in a hot field filled with promise. Healthcare Administration opened a new door into that field.

“Healthcare organizations, in-patient and out-patient, are using baccalaureate prepared people in managerial positions to run units and departments,” Wittmann-Price says. “It’s a good alternative program if

they don’t want to be a clinician. There are jobs available for them.

“They like the environment, and know that it’s steadily growing,” adds Wittmann-Price.



First graduating class contains 27 students

“They also know that a lot of the healthcare environment is moving from the in-patient to the out-patient. All of these out-patient centers have managers. Managers that do budgeting, scheduling, order supplies and those managers are typically baccalaureate prepared people that have to have a good basic knowledge of healthcare, finance, psychology and sociology -- what’s needed in healthcare.”

Healthcare administration incorporates many courses, which already existed in FMU’s nursing program and School of Business. So, offering the degree was a natural for the university’s administration.

The online aspect of the degree -- it’s FMU’s first entirely online degree -- offers flexibility that allows students to work or participate in extracurricular activities. That’s appealing to some students.

Others are enamored by the fact that it opens the door to opportunities within the healthcare field, but without being a clinician. Practitioner jobs on the front line of medicine -- nurses, doctors, nurse practitioners or physician assistants -- can be rewarding, but they’re not for everyone.

Jonathan Hicks, a member of the 2016 class, says the opportunities available in healthcare administration were exactly what he needed, even though he wasn’t aware of it.

Hicks entered college with plans to major in music, but he soon switched to nursing. He liked some aspects of that -- he soon decided that healthcare was the field for him -- but didn’t like all of it.

“I learned quickly that if you don’t have the passion to be a nurse, you’re not going to be very successful with it,” Hicks says. “I didn’t get too far in until I realized, ‘Hey, this isn’t for me.’”

After a conversation with Wittmann-Price, Hicks decided to give health care administration a try.

Breanna Robertson followed a similar path, switching from biology to healthcare administration, shortly after the new program began in 2015. Robertson says the move was a no brainer for her.

“I definitely jumped on it,” Robertson says. “I was very excited about Francis Marion bringing that program here... I really think I have a bright future in it.”

Other students obviously view the addition the same way. That’s why the new major is growing so quickly. Wittmann-Price has been busy accommodating the growth. Dr. Sarah Kershner will soon join the FMU faculty next year as a program director.

FRANCIS MARION'S PETERSON RECEIVES NCNW STATE EDUCATION AWARD

Articles submitted by FMU



Dr. LeRoy "Pete" Peterson Jr.

Francis Marion university's Dr. LeRoy "Pete" Peterson Jr., was recently honored by the South Carolina Mechanism of the National Council of Negro Women Inc. (NCNW) as the state winner in the area of education.

Peterson was presented with the award, in recognition of his lifetime contributions to education and the impact he has made throughout the community, at the organization's 42nd Annual Bethune-Height Program in Florence.

A native of Florence, Peterson earned a bachelor's degree at FMU in 1984 and received his Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of South Carolina where he was an undergraduate laboratory-teaching assistant. He joined the FMU faculty in 1990.

"The award is a great honor and I am really touched," says Peterson. "It will forever inspire me to continue to help fulfill the mission of this great organization."

An active researcher, Peterson has received grants from the National Science Foundation, the S.C. EPSCoR/Brin Collaborative Research Program, and the S.C. Commission on Higher Education. He is the author or co-author of many publications and presentations. He received the FMU Faculty Service Award for 2001-2002.

Peterson is a member of the American Chemical Society, the Pee Dee Math and Science Hub, the Science South project and the S.C. Academy of Science. He is president of North Vista PTA, serves on the board of Florence Boys and Girls Club and coaches in youth basketball leagues.

He is faculty advisor for Omega Psi Phi and Kappa Alpha Psi fraternities and Zeta Phi Beta sorority and is active in the university's African-American Faculty and Staff Coalition. He also is a member of the FMU Institutional Effectiveness Committee.

Founded in 1935 by South Carolina-native Mary McCleod Bethune, the NCNW's mission is to lead, develop, and advocate for women of African descent as they support their families and communicates.

For more information, contact Matt McColl, FMU Director of Media Relations, at 843-661-1227 or mmcoll@fmarion.edu

FMU'S ONLINE PROGRAMS RANKED AMONG STATE'S BEST

Affordable Colleges Online, a nationally recognized reviewer of distance learning in higher education, has ranked Francis Marion University as one of the best online colleges in South Carolina.

Affordable Colleges cited FMU's impressive student-professor ratio and relative affordability as some of the facets of the university's ranking.

In recent years, Francis Marion has been adding online offerings, including masters-level programs in nursing, business and education.

Affordable Online Colleges evaluated schools based on criteria,

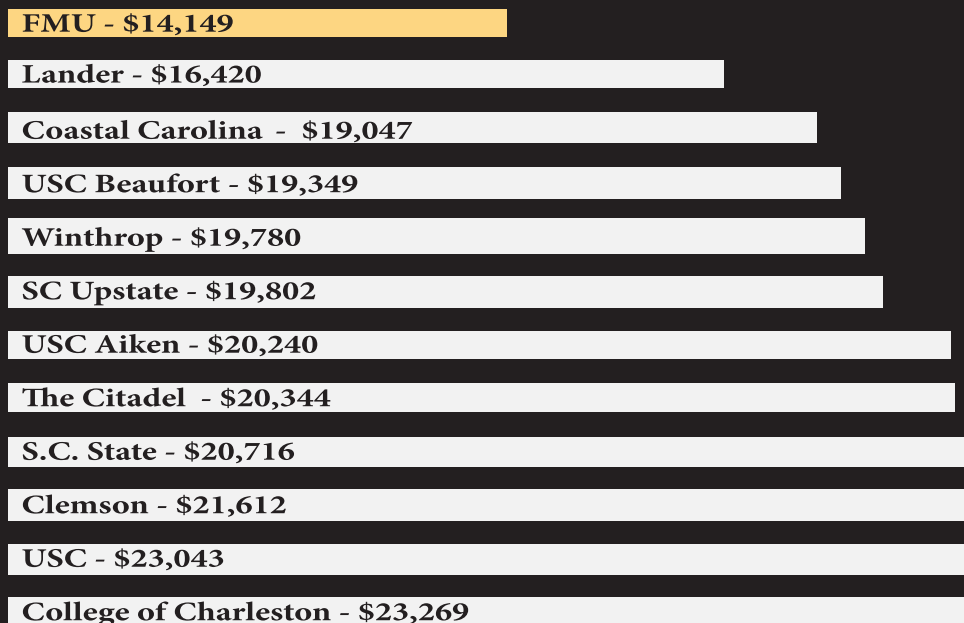
such as student to teacher ratio and the number of online programs offered.

"We wanted to highlight the schools in each state that are driving innovative learning and meeting demands of students," says Dan Schuessler, CEO and founder of Affordable Colleges Online. "These schools are not only offering great programs, but they have expanded their program excellence to the much-desired online environment."

For more information, visit Online.org.

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Source: CollegeFactual.com

PURSUING EXCELLENCE IN DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

An Editorial by Dr. Henry N. Tisdale, President Claffin University



Dr. Henry N. Tisdale

ORANGEBURG--Recent national events compel Claffin University to reestablish itself as a leading institution of higher education with regard to promoting excellence in diversity and inclusion. These are two core values on which the University was founded. It's in the University's DNA. An excerpt from Claffin's original charter declares, "No instructor in said University shall ever be required by the Trustees to have any particular complexion or to profess any particular religious opinions as a test of office, no student shall be refused admission, to

or denied any of the privileges, honors, or degrees of, said University on account of race, complexion, or religious opinions which he may entertain." The charter was signed by then Governor R. K. Scott on December 18, 1869.

Today, by design, Claffin's diverse educational community is one of its greatest strengths. The campus community, including faculty, staff and students, is represented by 40 countries and our own United States of America. This international flavor bodes well for an institution that honors the freedoms contained in the constitution of our democratic nation.

I am proud to continue in the tradition of former Claffin presidents who led the University to outstanding accomplishments in regard to diversity. President Hubert V. Manning, who served from 1956 to 1984, is notable for leading the University through the turbulent years of the Civil Rights Movement. Manning stood firm in the face of unfathomable challenges and University students were bloodied but unbowed for the cause of freedom and justice. As a Claffin student from 1961 to 1965, I participated in the protests in Orangeburg and witnessed those that occurred in cities and states across the land.

So today, in the spirit of my predecessors and as we move forward into the 21st Century, I challenge Claffin University to embrace a vigorous commitment to becoming recognized as a leading institution that pursues

excellence in diversity and inclusion. The formula for getting us there is to understand, respect and appreciate other cultures, customs and traditions.

Diversity and Inclusion are among the goals in The Claffin University Strategic Plan 2016-2021 "Claffin LEADS: A Shared Vision for the 21st Century," in which LEADS is an acronym for Leadership and Professional Development, Experiential Learning, Academic Excellence, Diversity and Inclusion and Student Success. The goal relating to diversity and inclusion states that Claffin will develop and implement an action plan that ensures excellence in diversity and inclusion among students, faculty and staff and the greater University constituency.

An essential element in the Strategic Plan is Claffin's overriding future aspiration. Accordingly, the vision for the future is "Claffin University will be recognized as a leading 21st Century institution of higher education that develops a diverse and inclusive community of globally engaged visionary leaders." The University's vision and strategic goals (along with other elements of the plan) are the result of a collaborative effort by faculty, staff, students, and alumni and approved by the Board of Trustees to define the course of the University's journey towards excellence.

They clearly set forth our desire and our determination to become a model diverse community of learning, exploration and self-examination whose impact will be felt across the state of South Carolina and the nation. I fully embrace the vision and goal outlined in our Strategic Plan and call upon all members of the Claffin Community and broader community to share the vision and commitment to diversity and inclusion.

During the coming months, the University will hold a number of forums to illustrate this commitment. The University's Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion will continue its work on this very important goal. Its work has become more urgent and necessary in light of the nation's current political climate.

I also call upon the Orangeburg community, the state and the nation to join us. We want to be, and we want our community to be, a place where we all feel safe, valued and respected.



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Barbara Wallace
Grandmother of Scholarship Recipient



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LEARNING BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Submitted by Dr. Kandace Bethea, Interim Superintendent



Dr. Kandace Bethea

There are many ways in which people learn. We learn by reading, watching movies and by experiencing a situation and actively participating in an event. Experiential learning is the process of learning through experience and is one of the best ways children learn both inside and outside of the classroom. Parents often ask how they can help their child with the learning process and one of the best ways parents can help their children is by providing them with experiences outside of school.

Experiential learning focuses on the learning process for the individual. Experiential learning builds a desire to learn, a hunger for absorbing knowledge. Much of learning builds on itself. When students are able to relate book knowledge to something they have experienced, learning is more apt to happen and be internalized.



Taking family trips is one example of providing your child with an experience that can be a learning event. Visit a zoo to see animals in an environment that is similar to how they might live in the wild. Aquariums are wonderful places to see how

animals and plants live under water. History museums bring alive the stories from our past and art museums explore our creative side of the brain. Visit different areas of the country where students can see different buildings, feel different weather, hear different noises, and taste different foods. Experiencing different places and new environments broadens a person's perspective and allows them to see situations differently.

Volunteering in the community is another way to share a learning experience. Show your child how easy it is to help another individual or group of people. Volunteering not only helps the community but it teaches children empathy, the power of giving, and builds an appreciation for what one already possesses. Playing indoor games with your child is a fun way to spend a cold or wet afternoon and on those warm and bright days there are outside games to play, bikes to ride and walks to take together. Playing games with your child teaches cooperation, taking turns and the art of winning or losing graciously. An important component of experiential learning is reflection, giving your child a chance to talk about an activity, to explore feelings and to ask questions about things they may not understand. Initiate conversations with questions such as "Did you notice...?" "Why did that happen?" and "How can you use that?" help children focus



meaning on the experience. Providing experiences for you and your children not only promotes learning but it also promotes the relationship you have with your child. Active talking and listening not only gives the parent a deeper understanding as to how their child thinks but it also builds trust. When your child is comfortable talking with you and has trust in your conversations then they will be more apt to come talk with you when they experience situations they feel uncomfortable with as they transition from childhood to their teens and then into becoming a young adult.

Experience life with your child and watch your child learn.



We Are Marion County Educate•Prepare•Inspire

Our Direction

Marion County School District: Preparing all students to live and work effectively, responsibly and productively within our society.

Our Purpose

Marion County School District educates, prepares and inspires students to be productive citizens in a changing global society.

Our Beliefs

- All students can become productive members of society.
- Education is a partnership among students, families, schools, and community.
- Our children are the center of all decision making.
- Education should prepare students to succeed academically and socially so they can compete for quality jobs and become productive members of society.
- Each person has intrinsic value and worth and is a unique individual with different needs and abilities.

3 WAYS SCHOOLS ARE REDEFINING MEALTIME



What's the most important part of a child's school day? Is it math? Reading? History? How about lunch? Research shows that children who eat breakfast and lunch are more attentive, have a

better attendance rate and ultimately do better in school. But getting children to partake in school meal programs is a challenge on its own, and with changes in government regulations, schools working together with food companies find themselves working to meet a new set of principles.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 changed regulations around what could and could not be offered for school lunch. Grains are now required to be at least 50 percent whole grain, sodium levels must be reduced and cafeterias are required to offer an increased number of fruit and vegetable options.

All of this supports a healthier lifestyle, but it leaves schools and food companies with a new challenge - getting kids to eat what is offered.

To comply with new federal guidelines and still create meals that students enjoy, schools across the country are employing solutions like the following:

*** Starting right.** Schools understand the importance of healthy breakfast to jump-start learning. Some schools are using to-go items with protein-packed ingredients like Cargill's Sunny Fresh individually packaged egg and cheese whole-grain wraps. These portable meals are offered to kids as they walk off the bus. For many students, this is their first meal of the day. Secondary schools are finding success in appealing to older students by offering new omelet stations to encourage

students to eat a healthy breakfast.

*** Lowering the sodium.** As part of the 2010 act, schools are looking for ways to lower sodium in their menu offerings and still provide meals kids enjoy. For example, many schools are incorporating a new line of turkey deli meats that are lower in sodium, taste great and are grown on family farms without growth-promoting antibiotics and verified by the USDA. This small change ensures a popular cafeteria staple remains on the menu for students in the future, delivering the nutrition they need.

*** Increased transparency.** More focus is being placed on the origins of school lunch ingredients. Because of that, schools and food companies are working to increase transparency for students, parents and community members alike.

"We work with schools to share information about the farmers who provide the foods used in school lunches so people get to know the story behind the food they eat," said Suzanne McCarty, business development director for Cargill Foodservice. "We know kids and parents increasingly want to understand the journey of their food from farm to fork."

Going forward

"It is important to partner with food companies as we work to meet the demands of feeding our students," says Joanne Kinsey, director of school nutrition services for Chesapeake Public Schools. "We all share in the same mission of providing our students quality, nutritious food that tastes good."

To learn more about how schools and food companies are working to improve school lunches, contact your local school or visit cargill.com/products/foodservice.

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CHOIR STUDENTS EARN ALL-STATE HONORS

Articles submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist

HARTSVILLE—Ten students from Hartsville High School (HHS) recently earned the highest honor bestowed on high school choral singers when the South Carolina Music Educators Association named them to the All-State Choir. The students are senior Andrew Lackey, senior Stone Martin, senior Daniel Thompson, junior Elianna Thompson, junior Chris Beasley, junior JaDira Fields, junior C.J. Johnson, junior Archie Torain, sophomore Larissa Berger and sophomore Lee Saxton.



HHS All-State Choir honorees - The South Carolina Music Educators Association named 10 Hartsville High School students to the All-State Choir this year, the most in school history. The students are (from left to right) Lee Saxton, Larissa Berger, Chris Beasley, Elianna Thompson, Daniel Thompson, Stone Martin, JaDira Fields, Archie Torain, Andrew Lackey and C.J. Johnson.

Dr. Jim Beaumier, the director of choirs at HHS, described the selections as “momentous”: “This is the largest number of All-State Choir students in the history of Hartsville High School,” Beaumier said. “These are all great students.”

The number of All-State honorees from HHS increased from six last year. In fact, the number of HHS students named to the All-State Choir has increased four years in a row. DCSD had more students named to the All-State Choir than the seven surrounding counties combined.

Lackey and Daniel Thompson earned All-State selections for a third consecutive year, something Beaumier said hasn’t had happen in his 12 years at HHS. Johnson, Martin and Torain earned the honor for a second time.

The 10 All-State Choir members will perform during the South Carolina All-State Concert on March 4 at Winthrop University in Rock Hill.

ROTARY CLUB CONTINUES SUPPORT



Third graders from Darlington County School District gather with principals, teachers and members of the Rotary Club of Darlington recently after the Rotary Club donated dictionaries to the students and their classmates. Pictured are (front row from left) BreasiaCarraway, Adrian Valencia, Oreion Small, ChelseyHowle, Keyonna Mullins, Elijah Murphy, Keyon James, Brandon Anderson, Cayla Howard; (second row from left) Brockington Elementary Principal Stephanie Bridges, Spaulding Elementary Principal Jackee Lynn, St. John’s Reading Coach Sharon Byram, Brunson-Dargan.

DARLINGTON – Continuing its annual tradition of supporting language skills in Darlington County School District (DCSD), the Rotary Club of Darlington donated nearly 450 dictionaries recently to third graders in Darlington, Lamar and Society Hill.

Members of the Rotary Club visited the district’s administrative offices to meet with students, principals and teachers, as well as take photos. The dictionaries will be handed out to every third-grade student at the Brunson-Dargan Elementary School, Brockington Elementary School, St. John’s Elementary School, Rosenwald Elementary/Middle School and Spaulding Elementary School.

Byard Stone Jr., a past president of the Rotary Club of Darlington, spoke briefly to the students about the importance of good language skills and a strong vocabulary.

Dr. Eddie Ingram, DCSD superintendent, thanked the Rotary Club for its continued support.

“This annual donation is a reminder of the giving spirit of and commitment to education by the Darlington County community,” Ingram said. “We are thankful for the Rotary Club of Darlington.”

SIX DCSD STUDENTS EARN ART COMPETITION HONORS

COLUMBIA— Emma Graham, a sophomore at Hartsville High School (HHS), earned a first place ribbon in the 2016 South Carolina State Fair’s Student Art Competition, and five other Darlington County School District (DCSD) students won awards in their respective contests.

Shayla Walters, a freshman at HHS, earned a second place ribbon in her division. Emily Gainey, a third grader at North Hartsville, took home a third-place award. Jason Hutchinson, second grade, and Kate Dargan, fourth grade, of St. John’s Elementary School earned honorable mentions in their groups. Katrina Turner, a second grader at St. John’s, received a second place award.

Marisa Johnson, DCSD’s Arts and Innovative Programs coordinator, praised the students and their teachers for their hard work. “Every school district in the state of South Carolina was represented in this statewide, juried art competition,” Johnson said. “We are very pleased to have student winners ranging from honorable mention to first place. Our art teachers set high expectations, and our DCSD student artists rise to the occasion creatively.”

The winning artwork was displayed during the State Fair this year, and the artists also took home some cash prizes.



Jason Hutchinson SJE 2nd grade



Emma Graham HHS 10th grade



Kate Dargan SJE 4th grade



Katrina Turner SJE 2nd grade



Emily Gainey NHE 3rd grade



Shayla Walters HHS 9th grade



Trailblazer Redefined

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by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Terry Bess

Tenacity, integrity and trustworthiness: Every trailblazer must possess these skills. "Tenacity is the commitment and ability to work on a task until it is finished despite obstacles and/or opposition. Integrity is being straightforward and fair with everyone you encounter, and trustworthiness is meaning what you say and then doing it," elaborates Terry Bess, the director of sales for Hampton Inn & Suites, Interstate 95 & Highway 52, and she is a woman who embodies these qualities and many more.

According to Bess, "A trailblazer is a person who takes advantage of opportunities to excel to do something in a different manner. This person is willing to take risks or to take actions based on faith, believing that something can be done even though it may appear to be impossible, or it has simply not been done previously. Also, a trailblazer is an initiator of new ideas and strategies that are rooted in wisdom; therefore, he or she is always willing to lead the way. Places, circumstances, and opportunities often dictate our career path. I had the desire to be in business, but I did not know precisely how the road would take me to my destiny. There were resting places along the way, detours and, sometimes, even new construction work. Even so, lessons were learned that enhanced my skills and abilities, broadened my knowledge concerning the necessities of life, advanced my personal and professional development, and then heightened my awareness of the needs of those around me."

Bess is a trailblazing business professional who has worked in several capacities with different types of companies or organizations. She attended business school in New York, was employed there and then in New Jersey with Sears, Roebuck & Co. In later years, she returned to her hometown of Darlington. Her job transferred with her, and she became the director of personnel services at the Sears store in Florence. In total, she was employed with Sears for approximately 30 years. Her next opportunity for employment was with the McLeod Regional Medical Center where she touched lives and opened doors for others for seven years. During her tenure at McLeod, she also decided to further enhance herself by attending Coker College. Now as the director of sales, the trend continues. "I have had opportunities to interact with many people who have needed employment assistance. For the many years that I worked as a personnel director, I encouraged persons, even after they were hired, to perform well so that they could qualify for higher positions. It may be said that I conducted personal training classes. In each position that I have ever worked, I encouraged

others to maximize their potential by furthering their education, if necessary, or I have encouraged them to raise the standards for their lives," she explained.

As a mother, Bess encouraged her son to become and to accomplish whatever it was that he desired. And, that is exactly what he did, with her in mind. He also went to college, worked for several years, and has recently retired from the navy. He now lives in Sacramento, Calif., where he, too, has been blazing trails for his own people for years. As he has done so, he has



Son James "Jamie" Jordon Dunston, Jr.

capitalized on the principles and values that his mother taught him, and her life has served as a source of inspiration. Being an inspiration to her son and employees came naturally for Bess, as it is a part of the cycle that comes with being a trailblazer: "While I may not be able to name names, I must say that others have blazed the path for me as well. It all reminds me of the second stanza of 'Lift Every Voice and Sing':

Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood
of the slaughtered.
Out from the gloomy past..."

Becoming a trailblazer is not an easy task, and some might feel that minorities face more barriers to growth than others. Bess, on the other hand, believes that it is the idea of barriers that creates mindsets, so she does what she can to extinguish that idea from the minds of others. In fact, Hampton Inn's Sales and Events Coordinator Jamall



Pictured from left to right: Monique Maxwell, Terry Bess and Jamall. Both Monique and Jamall are Sales and Event Coordinators

McFarlin sees Bess as the person who put him in a position "to succeed and go far in life." She worked with him to eliminate barriers that might obstruct him from succeeding.

In addition, Bess is known by Sales and Events Coordinator Monique Maxwell for being a great leader: "She leads by example and uses her life experiences as teaching tools."

Bess' ideals are simple. "When one is qualified for any position and has an 'I can' attitude and has confidence in his or her abilities, he or she becomes an achiever. Yes, there are protocols to be followed, but we must know how to present ourselves positively regardless of the setting or environment. Negative circumstances should propel us to do more than what is expected of us. One must prepare oneself by obtaining a quality education, which should be formal and informal. The person who wants to accomplish much must welcome challenges because they cause us to stretch beyond the limits that we set for ourselves. The person who wants to be influential must also view obstacles as opportunities to learn and succeed rather than as stumbling blocks. Then the young person who strives to make an impact needs to know that the starting point is not as important as the ending point. Some necessary processes occur along the way that properly equip everyone for their destiny."

"I possess strong work ethics which dictate that I perform to the best of my ability. I have learned how to be assertive, yet neither aggressive nor insolent. And when interacting with others, I try to be even-tempered, understanding, and respectful. I do not have 'bad' days. No day is perfect, but I am open-minded, and I do not believe that any of us should have preconceived attitudes or opinions about others, personally or professionally. It is a goal of mine to help others whenever I can because I realize that by doing so I am also strengthening and helping myself. To make it in this industry, I had to have my qualifications and credentials in place. Along the way, especially here at the Hampton Inn & Suites, I received an enormous amount of cooperation and support. I began as a part-time employee, and thanks to Mr. Corey Wallace, the hotel's manager who became cognizant of my capabilities, I now have the responsibility of leading his sales team. I am grateful

CONT'D PUTTING "SELF" TO THE SIDE TO BLAZE TRAILS FOR OTHERS



because I not only represent him but also Raldex, the owner of this hotel and three others located in Florence. Corey, too, is a trailblazer because he trusts me to deliver quality care and services to our customers and clients," said Bess.

"Today I am simply inspired by anyone who can positively impact or make a difference in the personal lives of others. We should be able to influence the policies and practices of businesses and industries; we should be advocates for political and social changes, especially when we witness corrupt, unjust, and unequal practices

being perpetrated on defenseless people. In essence, I am inspired by anyone who exemplifies and promotes productivity and positive change for all people. Too often, and with too many people, we neglect to make the necessary preparations for that which we desire. When we find that we are lacking or are ill-prepared in specific areas, we are very quick to look at others to blame, even circumstances. We all have potential; however, it is up to us as to how or if we decide to use it. We also have purpose, so we must become intent on knowing what it is, and then we must work to accomplish it." Bess is graciously walking in hers right now and has been doing so for years, regardless of adversity that has come against her.

Bess' personal journey through life has not been perfect. Even with her motivating others and blazing a path for them, many are not aware of her life-altering/threatening experience, which, in spite of, she was still determined to be the selfless leader that she is. A few years ago, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. She only shared this diagnosis with persons whose knowledge of the disease would be crucial to her healing, recovery, and becoming cancer-free. She did not want unsolicited pity. In fact, her therapies were arranged so that they would not interfere with her work schedule. Neither the diagnosis nor the therapies deterred her, but better equipped her to continue to be strong. "The process taught me much more about perseverance and hope." Being cancer-free means that Bess is continuing to blaze trails for anyone who has aspirations and for anyone who has had to cope with numerous challenges.

"Life is not always easy, and there are so many people who want to not only give up on themselves, but also on their lives. I want to be a source of help and encouragement for such persons, to be an example of what can happen when you persevere."

As a trailblazing woman in business, Terry Bess is that example.





Celebrating MLK



PURSuing THE DREAM OF DR. KING: ENSURING JUSTICE IS FOR ALL

by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Judge Gilleon Frieson

LAKE CITY --“Anytime you say the name ‘Martin Luther King Jr.,’ I don’t care what your cultural background is, you have to stop and recognize how intelligent and influential he was. I think the celebration of his life is so important because Dr. King did something that everybody in America should recognize. He held America accountable. He basically said that as Americans, you are under a contract, which is established by documents such as the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Emancipation Proclamation. By

demoralizing others and violating human rights, you are breaching that contract,” stated Judge Gilleon Frieson of Lake City.

A self-proclaimed “country boy,” Frieson comes from a background that has shaped his philosophy on life and dealings with others of different cultures. “My dad is from a community outside of Coward called New Hope, and my mom is from Lake City. My father was a pastor and my mom an evangelist, so I grew up in two contrasting worlds, in a home that was conservative, strict, and religious. I was brought up to be loving and accepting of all people, regardless of what was going on. They raised me to be very humble and very down-to-earth, able to meet with kings and the common man and know how to treat all fairly,” he said.

Acknowledging and celebrating Dr. King has always been a part of Frieson’s life. “When I was younger I would go to Columbia every year and march to the capitol. The first time, we met at a church near downtown Columbia. During that time the Confederate flag was still flying high. That day the cold wind was blowing so hard I couldn’t feel my face, but I realized there was a spiritual and social fight for justice that was more important than the feeling of discomfort from the weather,” he added.

Frieson is actually doing something to ensure that justice is being served in his community. He is doing so by acting as an impartial judge in Lake City: “My interactions with everyone, in particular the police department, have shown that I am not pro-police. I am not pro-defendant. I am Judge Frieson. I have to be as impartial as I can, and I have to make sure the process of justice takes place in the courtroom, making sure every party that is there knows they have rights, and those rights will be observed.”

His impartiality and unbiased nature extend to family members and friends also. “I have even had family members come into the courtroom who were found guilty. Everybody who comes in my courtroom gets the opportunity to have their voice heard, whether loud or angry, but I will listen. There are so many people who are angry about racism, sexism, or their economic situations. Grown men who are hurt because of relationships they didn’t have with their families are acting out because of that and not even realizing it’s the reason. They get that attention when they come to my courtroom. Everyone who leaves does so with some type of wisdom that I hope helps them with their life and their situation. That includes blacks, whites, males, females, everyone.”

“Today Dr. King would be proud that America elected its first black President, and he would be proud of all the ‘first blacks’ to break racial barriers. He would see the dichotomy of success and digression in our society and I think he’d be astounded by how far we’ve come and how far we still have to go,” Frieson elaborated. “And just imagine

Dr. King with a Twitter account or Facebook page. Imagine the influence he would have worldwide. He’d be a thousand times more effective than he was in the ‘60s. It would be unbelievable.”

Frieson believes the only way we as a diverse, divided nation can come together as one is with love. “Love is the cement that holds all relationships together and it’s the reason why there is much division. If you don’t love and understand me then you can’t respect me and treat me fairly. In most cases [of racism] those persons don’t see the person as a human being. America is not a melting pot. That’s not accurate. America is more like a salad bowl. When you look at it, there is no homogeneity. You can distinguish the differences but the things in the salad make it so great. Don’t look down on somebody. Try to see how that person can add to the nation as a whole.”

Frieson and his wife Catrice are also raising their own children to love all people. “We have to take our jobs as parents very seriously when we send our children out into this world. If we don’t prepare them, this world will chew them up and spit them out. My 16-year-old is race conscious because I have made her that way. I remember when she was younger and I told her, ‘My dream for you is to have friends of all nationalities. Just people who are different from you so you will have exposure to other cultures.’ Today she has Latino, white and black friends.”

“In Africa,” said Frieson, “crocodiles grow over twenty feet long but they are not the most dangerous animals in the water. The most dangerous is the hippopotamus. When a mother hippo sees a crocodile feeding on a carcass, she’ll push her baby in middle of the water where those crocodiles are. And they move out of the way for her baby. She does this to show the baby you are the most powerful thing in this water hole. Putting my kids in the face of social injustices and racism is my way of being the hippo, showing them that they have they power to make social changes.”

FINDING STRENGTH FOR ALL THROUGH RACIAL HARMONY

by Ta’Meeka Epps



Pastor Dean Page

DILLON--Promoting racial harmony is to increase understanding, cooperation, respect and communication among all races and ethnic groups. Our world is a great melting pot of groups which produce a constant source of differences. Differences in and of themselves are not bad; they are merely implied perceivable unlikeness, variation or diversity. The world is better because of the diversity, ingenuity, innovation and creation that arise where differences exist and are resolved positively. Racial harmony is

jeopardized when one or more groups of people are constantly treated unfairly for no reason other than their differences.

The life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was, and remains, for the equality for all men, and yet in 2017 racial harmony remains at the forefront of issues affecting nations across the world. Pastor Dean Page, senior pastor of the Powerhouse Christian Church in Dillon shared his views and thoughts on saluting King through promoting racial harmony, service and love.

One of the duties of a pastor is to provide spiritual leadership while kingdom building. King was a pastor dedicating his life to service, arguing for the virtues of diversity on a moral basis. Page believes that all mankind are charged with continuing the work of

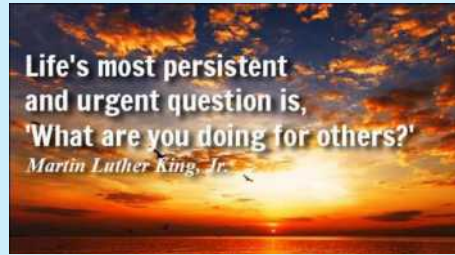


Celebrating MLK



CONT'D FINDING STRENGTH FOR ALL THROUGH RACIAL HARMONY

King. "We salute Dr. King each time we remember and acknowledge the impact that he has made in changing so many lives. Not only in January for his birthday or February for Black History Month, but on a daily basis through our acts of love and kindness. It would be such a disservice to the legacy that he built if we allowed what was birthed in him to die in us," stated Page.



There is but one race, and that is the human race. This message was articulated very clearly by King, a visionary who saw things from a different perspective and gave of himself for the human

race. The common thread of the whole of humanity is its multicultural diversity. There is where we find our strength. Our cultural, ethnic and spiritual differences epitomize all that is good in the human experience and why racial harmony must be a concern for all of humanity.

"Once we adopt the concept of loving our neighbors promoting racial harmony will no longer be seen as a task. It will become second

nature, just like breathing or eating," said Page. King believed a similar sentiment: "Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can only be done by projecting the ethic of love to the center of our lives."

The face of humanity is shown when we are able to love in a way which makes no distinction between enemy and friend while offering forgiveness to those who are our enemies. King further stated, "Agape love is not a weak, passive love. It is love in action a willingness to go to any length to restore community. I can only close the gap in broken community by meeting hate with love."

The work of King shows there is room enough for every person, regardless of race or creed to have a place in the world celebrating what makes them different. Family, community, school and church carry the burden to represent the interest of everyone in the community and must work together in a collaborative effort to provide positive examples for the future generations to emulate within the community. There must be continuous dialogue about any disparities or inequities, creating a plan of action while increasing awareness and finding solutions to the issues. We must emphasize the greatness of our multicultural diversity by including everyone's stories and accomplishments in the continued advancement of our communities.

CHRIS HANDLEY: LEADING THE WAY TO BRIDGE THE RACIAL GAP

by Les Echols



Snapshots of ServeFlo 2016

With the advent of social media and cell phone videos, racial division has become a highly publicized aspect of society, with many organizations having popped up as a response, or reaction to, current events. One organization, Helping Florence Flourish (HFF), has become a catalyst for proactivity. HFF has taken a proactive stance on issues of racial division and fostered solutions to the age-old problem of race relations by creating multi-diversity through community events.

Helping Florence Flourish began with an interview process that included interviews of community leaders from all sectors of Florence (i.e. business, education, political, church, family, arts or media). The goal was to find the agreed upon areas of greatest concern. Racial division was easily the area of greatest concern. As a result of the interview process HFF established focus groups to address each of the areas of concern: Racial Bridging (RB), Education, Homelessness, Restoration of the Family and Prayer. The focus group targeting the Racial Bridging component has been a very active focus group with the largest number of participants.

According to HFF founder Chris Handley, the associate pastor of First Presbyterian, the Racial Bridging focus group has had a strong commitment to create moments for connection and conversation (i.e. relationship). And relationship building has been the primary strategy to address the issue of racial division.

"To that end, the Racial Bridging focus group has established a pattern for gathering," says Handley. "The focus group has met monthly at Cumberland United Methodist since its inception. Its initial and foundational agenda was to listen to each other speak of the experiences

of each race. The reason this was important was to hear each other and develop a sense of understanding for one another. The result of this open and candid conversation was a growing sense of connection with one another to the extent that this racially diverse group lovingly calls one another 'cuz' (cousin) emphasizing that they are all from the same family," Handley concluded.

The group has also moved toward developing larger gatherings for more understanding of one race to the other. The RB focus group established a pattern of sponsoring pastor breakfasts so that pastors from both all races can hear from educators, community leaders and other colleagues. This allows area pastors to have the opportunity to be with one another and become more familiar with those of different races as well as different denominational backgrounds.

The focus group that coordinates our City Wide Prayer Gatherings has also gotten involved in racial bridging. Every month a different congregation around the city hosts a prayer gathering for the community. There have been prayer gatherings at King of King Church of God on Ingram St., Trinity Baptist on Darlington St., Mt. Zion AME on Cheves St., Central Methodist on Irby St. and Calvary Baptist on Cherokee Rd. In January there will be a City Wide Prayer Gathering on January 10 at 7:00 p.m. at St. John's Church on Dargan St. Each month the gathering is marked by a wide variety of individuals from all races and denominations.

HFF is patterned after other great programs that are actively seeking to unite people. Handley added, "We have been guided a great deal by what is called the Gospel City Movement (GCM). (GCMs are active in over 300 cities around the country.) Glenn Barth, author of 'The Good Cities,' is a leader in this movement. His consulting got us off to a great start. He has been a GCM leader helping cities like Dallas, Texas; Phoenix, Ariz.; and Modesto, Calif. These movements have contributed greatly to the unity and impact of the church in these communities. Florence is a similar size to Modesto, Calif. and Lansing, Mich. The Gospel City Movement in these towns has been models for HFF."

BEING AN UNEXPECTED INFLUENCER

Articles submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist



Nicole Jones

LAMAR--Spaulding Middle School Principal Nicole Jones did not plan to be a principal or even work in education. In fact, she took a rather unique professional route to the schoolhouse.

"I didn't start out in education," Jones said. "I was a probation officer with the Department of Juvenile Justice, and I often found myself in the schools. I cared about the children I had on probation. I quickly became an advocate for them. I found out that my heart wasn't really into probation; it was something more."

Jones decided to step away and earn a degree in counseling. She began working with the Department of Mental Health, where she again found herself helping children. Her passion for serving kids continued to blossom, and she responded by becoming a school counselor at Darlington High School. After several years, Jones decided to return to working with younger students, and she assumed the role of guidance counselor at Spaulding in 2006.

That's where Dr. Willie "Bill" Boyd Sr., Darlington County School District's associate superintendent, first noticed her leadership potential. She credits his encouragement for her decision to return to school and seek an administrative certification.

After serving a few more roles, including as assistant principal, Jones became principal of Spaulding Middle School. Her journey into education had come full circle, and she realized just how essential her collective experiences would become.

"I want people to know just because they didn't start out in education, that they can do it," Jones said. "My previous experiences are actually an advantage for me. I can tell the kids what I've seen at the Department of Juvenile Justice, and my mental health work is so helpful. We know the field of education is so much more than just teaching. It is a team effort."

Jones is entirely appreciative of the support staff at Spaulding Middle School and in the district. Each job performed by her employees proves vital to success of the students.

Jones hopes her unusual career path might motivate others to become educators even if they do not take the traditional steps. She is particularly interested in recruiting future teachers by inspiring her young students to consider those careers.

"We need to reach out to those kids and say, 'Hey, you might want to consider going into education,'" Jones said. "We never know what kind of influence we might have on children. Education is so important, maybe more so now than ever before."

Several years ago, Jones had a student in her school that was quiet and kept mostly to herself. A writing assignment in English class tasked the students with dedicating a yearbook page to another person. The teacher later brought one student's page to Jones, who was entirely surprised to learn the page had been dedicated to her.

"It just spoke volumes to me," Jones said. "I don't remember having too much interaction with the student. That taught me early on that I always have to be at the top of my game. We have such a powerful capability to influence students, and we cannot take that lightly. Many times, students are just looking for someone to emulate."

Jones is thankful for her supportive husband, Paul, and her two children. Her husband essentially took care of the children while Jones returned to school for her administrative certification. Perhaps that dedication and passion toward education influenced another person aspiring to enter in education: Jones' 16-year-old daughter tells everyone she wants to be a teacher because of her mom.

CELEBRATING SOMEONE WHO SERVE OTHERS



Dr. Willie "Bill" Boyd Sr

Hailing from Newberry, Dr. Willie "Bill" Boyd Sr. has spent the past 49 years serving the students, faculty and families of the Darlington County School District. A military veteran, a devoted husband and father, and a treasured mentor to many, Dr. Boyd is the school district's associate superintendent.

Boyd believes the impact a teacher can have on children is one of the most important in life.

"I've been fortunate to be a part of this profession," he said. "I strongly believe that it was a divine calling. As a teacher, you have a remarkable opportunity to reach so many people who come from all walks of life."

A firsthand witness to segregation and eventually desegregation, Boyd holds a respect for education that is difficult to describe.

"When I graduated high school in 1962, there were no admissions to major universities in South Carolina," he said. "If it had not been for the historically black colleges and universities in my era, black people would not have gotten a college education in many states. However, while I grew up in a segregated situation, I've been fortunate to maintain a positive attitude toward education."

Boyd attended Benedict College for his undergraduate degree, and he was drafted shortly thereafter. He spent 1967-68 in Vietnam as a U.S. Army combat infantryman. Upon his return, he married his college sweetheart, Patricia White Boyd. The two raised four children, three of whom are their biological children. A fourth became the couple's own after her mother passed. Boyd had the pleasure of giving her away in holy matrimony this past summer.

He began work as a teacher at Mayo High School, progressed as an assistant principal and became principal of Rosenwald High School. In 1982 he returned to Mayo as principal. Upon the encouragement of his mentor, Dr. I.A. Greene, Boyd later joined the district's administrative staff as transportation director. In 2005 he was named the South Carolina Transportation Director of the Year. He became assistant to the superintendent, assistant superintendent for administration and, most recently, assumed the role he continues to serve.

As associate superintendent, he oversees the Pupil Personnel division to include the school district's transportation department as well as school resource officers, nurses, social workers, Adult Education, attendance and community liaisons. He is the district's hearing officer and wise counsel on many issues. His passion for service extends beyond the school district. He is chairman of the Florence-Darlington Technical College Board of Directors and also serves on the McLeod Health Board of Trustees and on the First Church of God Board of Trustees.

In 2012 the Greater Darlington Chamber of Commerce named Dr. Boyd its Citizen of the Year. Three years later, the South Carolina Association of School Administrators bestowed upon him its Lifetime Achievement Award.

"One of my greatest supporters has been my wife," he said. "We've raised four children here in Darlington County School District. And we have instilled in our children the lessons we learned growing up. Regardless of the adversity, see it as a challenge to move forward. Take stumbling blocks and make stepping stones."

"As long as we can make a viable contribution to society, then we should," Boyd said. "I have learned that it does not matter about the color of one's skin or their background or their gender. If we truly love people, then we will treat people right."

COMING TO THE FOREFRONT TO FIGHT THE CRISIS

by Anna Bowman



RaShawn Aaron pictured with his students

MARION -- Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka in 1954 was a landmark U.S. Supreme Court case in which the Court declared state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students to be unconstitutional, so how can there be a crisis in “black” education? It may not be easy to detect for the average American, but educators like RaShawn Aaron feel the “crisis” is real and detrimental to black youths in America.

Aaron, the lead teacher/site manager for McMillan Head Start in Marion for the past year, sees one major problem that he feels might be one of the causes of the crisis – the lack of black male educators in the school system. “We have come a long way, yet I feel the more black male educators there are, the more positive impact they will have (in the classroom). Black male educators are very small in numbers compared to other races,” said Aaron. The lack of black male teachers as role models has often been pinpointed as a reason for the high rate of drop-out for black male students, who are more often affected by this scenario.

When asked if the crisis is institutionalized, Aaron is guarded but stated, “Some educators are not able, or don’t want to relate to black children, therefore they do not exhaust all avenues to ensure that black children are ready for the next step. Black children are sometimes not receiving the basic building blocks needed at an early age and they fall further and further behind. As they get older some tend to get frustrated with school and act out because the importance of an education has not been stressed.” He added, “Our public school system, in my opinion, has not and unfortunately will not acknowledge this problem; yet they have only implemented consequence for when they (students) act out or get in trouble when we should be trying to understand and repair the problem at the core. Teachers should never have a preconceived notion that where a child comes from determines where a child is headed.”



It’s important to note that this “crisis” didn’t happen overnight, and Aaron expounded another important factor that he feels could be fueling this educational gap – the family. “I feel family plays a major part in this crisis as well. The make-up of the family is changing drastically every day. The traditional family is no longer the norm and a lot of black males aren’t living in the household with their children



which some may not admit, but it definitely effects the family as well as their children.”

He’s extremely proud of the head start program where he works because they have many programs in place to ensure not only are black children successful but all



RaShawn Aaron pictured with his students

children are also. “We not only ensure that the children, (mostly low income), receive the tools they need to succeed, but their families as well. We have programs to help parents go back to school, get their G.E.D., get into college, get a job, among other things. We take pride in ensuring that families know that they are the primary educator

and this is something that is very important.”

Aaron, who comes from a family of educators--his mother Sandra Page is a special needs educator, his aunt Audrey Hart is an eighth grade ELA teacher, his cousin Charles Hart Jr. is a middle-school ELA teacher as well and his brother Shamaree Aaron is an ISS teacher for Dillon Middle School--is grateful that someone gave him an opportunity to become a teacher assistant at a local head start (Hamer Canaan Head Start). That’s where he served six years learning, teaching and studying early childhood education. He believes if other black males were given the same opportunity to learn how to become a teacher, all kids would benefit from them being in the classroom, especially black male students. He stated, “I’m the only black male head start teacher in our area and we (black males) make up less than 2% of the whole population of educators in the Early Childhood field.”



On the front line of this “crisis,” Aaron doesn’t shy away from the fact that “black children are in a state of emergency, and drastic measures must be made to counteract this epidemic. Technology is a gift and a curse. When used correctly it gives us the ability to gain knowledge and information at the blink of an eye. Yet, it also exposes



our children, if not guided correctly, to things that are not appropriate, not the best role models, or just not helping them to grow academically.” The crisis is indeed real, and immediate solutions are needed to keep black students from becoming victims of the awful “school to prison pipeline” that has claimed so many young black male and female students in the past.

He is pleased to be a part of the solution: “My brother and

I have started a tutoring program in which we help children from pre-school to high school (Aaron’s Tutoring Service) throughout the week in efforts to do all we can to help the crisis affecting our black youth.”

Aaron and his wife, Kimberly Aaron, are the proud parents of three beautiful children Zacchariah, Zaire and Zy’kiera. The family resides in Dillon.



BRIDGING THE GAP IN EDUCATION

by Ta' Meeka Epps



Mary Howard

LAKE CITY - Education is defined as the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Education is believed to be an important component for the ability to make contributions to one's community, as well as to gain access to a better life.

In the U.S., education is compulsory meaning required by law, and over 60 years after the desegregation of schools, a very problematic educational gap still exists. The personal and social costs of educational underachievement for those

affected are considerable, not only for the individual but also their families, their communities and for the economic viability of our nation. Addressing the crisis in black education should be considered one of the most important goals in America's past, present and future. The aim should be to close the achievement gap between ethnic and racial groups, leveling the playing field.

Formal schooling starts at about the same time for students across racial and ethnic groups, which supports the ideology that early child development is essential to the emotional, social and physical development of young children and has a direct effect on their overall development and on the adult they will become. Ms. Mary Howard, principal of Lake City Early Childhood Center (3k-2nd grade), gave her thoughts on the crisis in black education and why it is an ongoing debate.

"The crisis in black education stems from the lack of experiences/background knowledge and barriers to equal education. The crisis continues due to the lack of resources, equity, and funding in rural areas. Educational inequities reduce the likelihood of closing the achievement gaps. Research shows in 2009, the results of the National Assessment of Educational

Progress, also known as the Nation's Report Card, African American eighth graders scored lower in math and reading than any other racial group. This debate continues as the achievement gap widens between African Americans and other cultural groups."

Excellent schools don't just happen; they require adequate funding and the right kind of leadership, both at the classroom level and in the front office. The most effective school principals have what it takes to lead their academic institutions and ensure increased student achievement. As Howard is responsible for establishing academic standards, overseeing their implementation and making sure teachers are equipped with the necessary resources to meet those benchmarks.

Howard believes bridging the gap starts with finding creative ways to end generational poverty, increase family literacy and increase funding for pre-kindergarten programs. She stated, "It is important to start early with building foundational skills to close the gap. Students need to experience success early and have positive role models throughout their educational career. It is critical to have a vision of academic success for all, to create a climate conducive to learning and to celebrate the small successes within the school. I believe that all students can learn in their own way and at their individual rates. Some students will need more support than others, but as an educator we are to provide excellence everyday to show the promise of the future."

Decreasing gaps in student achievement means that we must increase the learning gains in black education. This will require the creation of public policies and legislation that support public schools committed to identifying and setting high and attainable goals for students and ensuring that teachers and students are supported in these efforts. It will also require meaningful collaboration among community organizations, leaders, parents and the school. All students deserve a quality public education, and this can only occur when we close the gaps in equity and access.



Celebrating Women's History

IVY POPE: MAINTAINING A FURNITURE LEGACY

by Anna Bowman



Ivy Pope

DILLON - It's been 27 years since Ivy Pope started her career with Pope Furniture as a secretary for the company. Today Ivy, a third-generation family member, has successfully followed in the footsteps of her father, Bob Pope, her uncle, and her grandfather who started Pope Furniture in 1950 in Dillon. And like her father, Ivy started out in the family business learning the ropes from the bottom to the managerial position she now holds.

Building upon her family's legacy, Ivy returned to work in the family owned-business after graduating in 1989 from Converse College in Spartanburg, where she double majored in business administration (focusing on management) and sociology. Ms. Pope is not only keenly aware of her family's legacy, but she is also aware of what her family's furniture store means to the Dillon community.

Pope proudly acknowledges what their loyal customers have known for years: "We sell quality furniture and stand behind everything we sell! We are a third-generation company selling furniture and we have over three generations of buying quality furniture. We offer 90 days same as cash, offer in-store financing and we have layaway. We deliver within a 60-mile radius FREE! We also set up and take off our customers' old furniture."

But selling quality furniture is only half of the job that's made Pope

Furniture a successful business since being established in 1950. "You must be the type of business where people enjoy shopping not only for furniture, but for the great customer service. We treat our customers like they are part of our family. We love our customers and have a good rapport with each one."

Pope attributes the company's continued success to her amazing staff: "I wear many hats as manager of such a small business, and I have seven employees counting on me to make Pope Furniture a thriving success," she said. Her staff includes, Donna Watts, her secretary of eight years; Annette Hood, credit manager for 11 plus years; Tammy Lewis, sales lady; an interior decorator, Pat Hudec and two delivery men, Greg Toon and Ronte McGill. "We are a close-knit group and we treat Pope Furniture like it belongs to us all." Pope not only manages the store but also does all the buying for the store, marketing, customer service, accounts payable and receivable, and payroll and inventory.

Growing up in Dillon, Ivy has always been an active supporter in her community. "I volunteered for over 15 years with the Make-A-Wish Organization out of Florence; I was a member, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and president for two years for the Glove and Trowel Garden Club; a member of Dillon County Chamber of Commerce; 2016 graduate of Palmetto Leadership of Dillon County; 2016 Business Person of the year, and faithful member of Little Rock Baptist Church. I'm also involved in Women's Missions and Rock of Ages Missions bible study program at my church too. I love to travel and visit my many friends," said Pope.



Celebrating Women's History

JEANNETTE GLENN: CHILDHOOD DREAMS COMING TO FRUITION

Articles by Anna Bowman



Jeannette Glenn

As a little girl, Jeannette Glenn said she was often asked, "Little girl what do you want to be when you grow up?" and she stated that her constant answer was, "A nurse and a teacher." While growing up, Glenn would find herself caring for injured animals and, occasionally, a family member or two. She said that dream and goal of helping others remained with her throughout middle school and high school. "I found much pleasure on Sundays visiting patients in the hospital instead of going to movies, etc. There was something inside of me that gave me

joy in the work," said Glenn.

Upon graduating from Wilson High School in 1963, Glenn attended Kate Bitting Reynolds Memorial Hospital in Winston Salem, N.C., to study nursing. The school was instrumental in preparing her with the professional deportment to provide care to all patients in need with compassion, care, concern and competence while always respecting their dignity. She furthered her education with a Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) degree from USC, a Master of Science in nursing (MSN) from the MUSC, and further studies at Francis MMU and Harvard University.

Looking back on her extraordinary 45-year career with McLeod Regional Hospital, Glenn stated, "I had the extraordinary opportunity to fulfill many roles, staff nurse, head nurse, nurse educator, AVP and VP of Education and Training and the last 20 years of my 45 years of service in this phenomenal organization as the Senior VP of Human Resources, Educations and Training." She stated that it was an awesome experience being a part of the dynamic organization as it changed from McLeod Infirmary Hospital to McLeod Memorial Hospital, to McLeod Regional Hospital and to McLeod Health, furthering its great Mission

of Service. Because of her tireless service, Glenn was honored with a painted portrait at a ceremony in August 2014. The portrait hangs in a hallway at McLeod alongside portraits of other notable individuals that served at the hospital. She is so proud to have lived her dream life of caring for people. "My childhood dream consistently was to become a nurse and a teacher. Because of the grace, guidance, and mercy of my Lord and Savior, I have been allowed to realize my dream while serving others. I feel very blessed."

She is a lifetime member of Trinity Baptist Church where she serves as secretary of the Trustee Board, has served as a facilitator of Children at Worship Services, currently serves as a Sunday School teacher, the president of Esther Missionary Circle, on the Chair Health Committee and as a member of the Missionary Society. She is a Diamond Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. and is a member of the Florence Alumnae Chapter, Sigma Theta Tau National Nursing Honor



Mrs. Glenn stands beside her painted portrait with daughter Felicia and her grandsons Jalen and Stephon.

Society, and the Francis Marion Nursing Honor Society. She holds a lifetime membership in the NAACP, is treasurer of Florence Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, and is a part of the National Council of Negro Women and the Girl Scouts of America.

A native of Florence, Glenn is the daughter of the late Harry and Ather Charles and the wife of the late Rodney S. Glenn. She is the mother of two daughters, Felicia Glenn Alexander and the late Michelle Glenn Carey, and has a son-in-law, Christopher O. Carey. She takes much pride in her three grandsons: Stephon, Jalen and Cameron.

ON BECOMING WELL RESPECTED IN THE LEGAL FIELD



Marguerite Willis

"Marguerite Willis loves a good challenge. And no issue is too big or too small for her to handle – whether she's defending clients in complex commercial litigation or doing her part to build the next generation of women business leaders. Marguerite Willis is no stranger to the hard work and dedication it takes in order for a woman to succeed in a male dominated world. As a partner at Nexsen Pruet, one of the state's largest business law firms, Willis stands as one of the most successful female attorneys in South

Carolina."

After growing up in Greenville, she earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Michigan, with high distinction, and graduated with honors from Stetson University College of Law. A member of the prestigious Litigation Counsel of America, her stellar antitrust and business litigation career began at the Howrey firm in Washington, D.C. In 1981, she became the firm's first-ever female partner. Willis points to that success as a personal example of "girl power" and breaking a "glass ceiling."

Willis joined Nexsen Pruet's Columbia office in 2000 following her marriage to Frank Willis, who was then the mayor of Florence. As the co-chair of the law firm's Antitrust and Unfair Competition Practice, Willis regularly represents clients before state and federal courts and supervises legal teams that develop proactive solutions for corporate clients. Willis has been involved in some of the firm's largest verdicts and often serves as national counsel for complex litigation, such as class actions, false advertising, monopolization and vicarious corporate

liability.

Willis' accolades are numerous. She is an American Bar Foundation Fellow, a highly-selective honorary organization of lawyers, judges, and legal scholars whose public and private careers have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the welfare of their communities and to the highest principles of the legal profession. She is a founding member of the Academy of Antitrust Law and a member of the Antitrust Law Section of the American Bar Association. Additionally, Willis is a member of the American Association for Justice, the immediate past president of the South Carolina Women Lawyers Association, and a past president of the Women's Bar Association of Washington, D.C. Well respected by her peers, she is among the South Carolina Super Lawyers for Antitrust Litigation, class action/mass torts and business litigation, as well as Best Lawyers in America, which lists her for commercial litigation.

Willis is not all about work. She enjoys sharing her knowledge and experiences with others by speaking regularly to civic groups and community organizations across the Palmetto State. If you find yourself out and about around Florence on the weekend, keep an eye out. You might see Willis and her husband, Frank, out walking their two Labradors, "Bojangles" and "Cotton."





Celebrating Women's History

ACHIEVE FINANCIAL SUCCESS BY INVESTING WITH A VET

by Anna Bowman



Frances Segars Jones

HARTSVILLE -- Frances Segars Jones loves her job as a financial adviser for Stifel in Hartsville. "I joined Stifel in January 2012 and began their training program along with the education and exam requirements to obtain my Series 7 and Series 66 licenses," stated Jones. She and business partner John Johnson work together as an adviser team. "We believe our collaboration adds tremendous value to the clients we serve," said Jones. Many financial advisers do not operate as a team, but she, along with Johnson,

feels their business plan allows them to focus 100% on client service.

Prior to joining Stifel, Jones, a Clemson University graduate, worked in the NASCAR arena, with International Speedway Corporation and later Rockwell Automation, in marketing, corporate hospitality and public relations areas. After five years, she decided to join her father's real estate business, Segars Realty. She worked for over a decade in real estate sales and management before deciding to pursue her current career as a financial adviser. Even though Jones was a novice financial adviser, she knew this career path was meant for her and she was eager to tackle the education needed to obtain her credentials.

Jones acknowledges the fact that most financial advisers are male, however, she feels women can be particularly well suited tend for the profession: "Women often are good listeners and compassionate. These skills, in addition to the financial education, are critical and necessary for an adviser to do a good job of assessing a person's financial needs and wants. It's the first step prior to selecting appropriate investments." She believes these traits also strengthen bonds of trust, which ultimately

causes clients to share more openly and allow her to do her very best work.

Discussing money issues with a financial adviser isn't easy, so clients need to find someone who not only has a mind for the job, but also has a heart for the client's best interests. After working the past five years as a successful financial adviser, Jones can pinpoint exactly what she loves about her job. She enthusiastically stated, "I love the 'puzzle solving' part of my job. Basically, what I mean by that is helping clients map out and implement a comprehensive plan that is specific to their unique situation. All people aren't going to need the same cookie-cutter portfolio of investments. I recognize and embrace that, and feel challenged by that. I also enjoy getting to know people and families in a meaningful way rather than just on the surface. I appreciate being given their trust and confidence, and appreciate being given the opportunity to help clients achieve goals."

She encourages anyone looking to invest soon to "interview qualified advisers, and choose a person or team with whom you feel comfortable sharing your most personal information. Investors should feel confident in the professional ability of their adviser, and investors should feel confident in the unwavering integrity of their adviser," she said.

Jones and her husband Stephen, who is a veteran financial adviser with Stifel in Florence, are the parents to two wonderful little boys, ages six and eight. The family resides in Hartsville. She is a member of the Board of Trustees for McLeod Health and serves on the Kalmia Gardens Board of Directors. Recently, she joined the Lake Junaluska N.C. Board of Trustees. Additionally, Jones enjoys volunteering at her boys' school, Carolina Elementary, and participating in a local garden club. She especially values spending time with her family and loves to spend time outdoors.

USING FRANKNESS TO REMIND OTHERS OF A PROGRESSIVE NATION

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Catherine Miller Harris

At the time the U.S. was founded, female citizens did not share all of the same rights as men, including the right to vote, which gave the right to hold public office. Catherine Miller Harris was born June 8, 1918, two years before the right known as woman suffrage was adopted by the U.S. in 1920. By the time she graduated from Wilson High School in 1936, women had been given rights however progress was happening at a very slow pace just as it is today.

Harris was born and raised in Florence, receiving her formal education in the public school system of Florence. She continued her education beyond high school at South Carolina State University, majoring in elementary education. Upon receiving her degree, she returned home to Florence and was employed by Florence School District One as an elementary education teacher. As an educator she wanted her teachings to reach beyond the four walls of the classroom she wanted to teach the community.

Through her desire to help others, Harris became a trailblazer in her own right in the state of South Carolina by becoming one of the first females and African Americans to hold public office as a notary public. As an educator and entrepreneur during the time when times were changing and the foundation of the country was being challenged so women could enjoy full-fledged status as an American citizen, it must have been hard, but to endure it while paving the way for others

becomes the reward for a life lived with grace.

As a notary, Harris was constituted by law to serve the public in non-contentious matters. However, in her own words, "I served because it gave me a thrill knowing I was able to help someone, so even if I wasn't a notary or an educator I would have still lived a life of service." Service to others is a selfless act-one, which brings pride to the face of Harris when others chime in during the interview, throwing out adjectives about their beloved Ms. Cat, as she is called by the staff at New Generation Adult Day Care Center in Florence, where she shares her memories during the day.

Adjectives such as "humble," "giving" and "loving" were used by Karen Belissary, assistant administrator at New Generations Adult Day Care Center. Harris added one last word: frank. "I am frank. I tell people what I mean. I would urge them to vote because I remembered how proud the women were when I was younger about having the right. So it was my duty to remind people how others had broken down barriers for us. Others set the precedent-set the bar-for us to be able to do whatever little we can to help the next."

Harris lived her life showing others through her actions they should always be truthful in their dealings because it will come back to them. She wanted others to let people know through their actions they always tried and gave their best in hopes it would encourage someone else to keep trying. Harris is living proof that change is a good thing, and from good things other great things are birthed. Centenarians such as Harris are to be celebrated for their tenacious spirit and resilient resolve to move forward because they knew progress could never stand still.



Celebrating Women's History

RECOGNIZING ONE WHO TRULY DESERVES IT: STARLEE ALEXANDER

by Mallory Brayboy



Starlee Alexander

Many members of the Florence community know Starlee Alexander as their local State Farm Insurance agent who has been in the business here for over three decades. A career in insurance was not initially what Alexander set out for, however. She began taking business courses in high school with intentions of working in retail. The Florida native went on to attend Florida A&M University where she earned her degree in business management. Alexander secured her first job with Jordan Marsh, a major clothing store at the time, located in Miami, Fla.

"They came to the campus recruiting office and I was interviewed. Then they flew me down to Jordan Marsh, I interviewed again and I got the job," says Alexander. She soon found that this would not be her dream job after all. During training she worked in retail, but was shocked to learn she had been offered the housekeeping position upon completion of training. Unmoved, Alexander packed her bags and joined her sister in Orlando, Fla. The two worked diligently to further their education, and Alexander earned her master's in human services from Nova University. During this time, she also secured a job with the Community Action Program in her hometown of Dade City, Fla. This position ultimately lead to her meeting her husband, Rep. Terry Alexander. The two met while on a business conference in Atlanta, Ga. After dating for a couple of years, they were married and Alexander moved to her husband's home state, South Carolina.

Shortly after her arrival in Florence, Billy Campbell, a local State Farm manager, was looking to diversify his team of agents in the Florence area. Alexander's husband was approached and suggested that Campbell talk to his wife. Alexander then interviewed with Campbell and began the intake process, along with 25 other applicants. Needless to say, she was the chosen candidate and has been with State Farm since 1985, after only six months of being in South Carolina. "I was what you called "a scratch agent," says Alexander. The company basically provided her an opportunity with no existing accounts. In essence, she started her insurance company from scratch, as an independent contractor for State Farm Insurance. "You start to market and build your business one customer at a time. With State Farm, the branding was there: 'Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.' The name itself sells, but you must still put some work into the business," says Alexander. Having always longed for a business of her own, Alexander entered the field with an open mind. "When I interviewed and realized that I could be my own boss, and that I was going to be self-employed, I had the drive," she says. Alexander says a major part of the business is selling and that you cannot be afraid of getting a "no." "It's proven to be beneficial and long term for me because I've never seen myself as being a quitter. Anything I start, I want to finish. And I try to put my heart into it," she says.

Not only did this Florida native arrive in a new state and begin a blossoming career, but she also became a trailblazer, active in several organizations, one of which is the Florence County Chamber of Commerce, where she served as the first African American Chairwoman of the Board of Directors and is presently a board

member. Alexander also served on the McLeod Foundation Board, McLeod Fellows Program and the Florence School District One Board of Trustees. She served as president of the Florence Bethune Section and the State Convener of SC State Mechanism (chairwoman) for over ten years with the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW). "It wasn't something I was doing to be seen. It was because it was in my heart," she says. Her love for the NCNW stemmed from her admiration of the philanthropic efforts of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune and Dr. Dorothy Height. "They were working for our children and education, and giving back to the community. I give back because I loved the vision and the mission of NCNW."



Alexander believes in passing the torch down to others just as much as she enjoys leading. "I believe in training someone else to take our place, to give others the opportunity to serve, and to use their time and their talents." She believes that a trailblazer is one who not only helps others but also sets the path of success for future leaders. "And I pray that I have done just that in my very small way."

Aside from a successful long-term insurance career, Alexander recently teamed up with local business owners Charlene Lowery and Doris Lockhart to open Mi Ladies 182, a women's fashion boutique located in downtown Florence. This March will make two years of business with the boutique and 31 years with State Farm. She cites longevity as one of her accomplishments. "To know that I've been in business for 31 years is a great accomplishment. There are so many that have started this journey and they didn't make it. But, I've always been able to maintain," she says. She enjoys many things about entrepreneurship, including working with people, the freedom that comes with business ownership and being able to give back to her community. "I feel blessed and privileged, and I thank God for the opportunity to serve when and where I can," says Alexander. "There's also a flipside in this process of self-employment. When push comes to shove, sometimes I'm the only one there." Like all business owners, nothing comes easy. Alexander expressed the importance of self-care in success. "Keep your head afloat, your mind clear, and stay focused on your end results. Take a little time off for yourself so that you can rejuvenate and keep going," she says. "When I wake up I don't dread going to work. If you dread going to work, it's time to change jobs or retire."

Her professionalism as a business person and her willingness to give of her time and talent to the betterment and growth of Florence and the Pee Dee goes without question. Alexander has received countless recognition and awards from several organizations, including being honored by Florence Darlington Technical College's first annual Entrepreneur Forum. This past year, Alexander was the honoree for the Masked Award at the UNCF Masked Gala for her service to this organization where she served for over ten years as the Gala Chairperson. Though many may view Alexander as a trailblazer in the community, she shies away from the recognition. "I would not personally call myself a trailblazer, but I hope that I can encourage others that with hard work and perseverance, anyone can reach your goals and dreams in life... Be your best motivator."



ABB LATTA GRAND OPENING



(Left to Right) Johnny Floyd, Glenn Greene, Shannon Bryant, Kimberly Driggers, Jackie McKenzie, David Anderson, Neal Anderson and Betty Byrd.

LATTA--In a time when good news in the financial industry is rare, our local bank is pleased to announce signs of progress and growth with expansion into Dillon County. Anderson Brothers Bank celebrated their grand opening of their newest branch on Thursday, Dec. 1 at 100 East Main St. in Latta. The recently completed renovations to its newest office in Latta, was well received by the residents of Latta and we couldn't be more pleased to be a part of this great community.

The Grand Opening was kicked off with Glenn Greene III, Latta's branch manager and loan officer, saying a few words, and the Dillon County Chambers ribbon cutting with Ernie Adams, Dillon County Chamber president, speaking. Also on hand to say a few words to the Latta citizens were Buzzy Finklea, Dillon County Council chairman, and Earl Bullard, Latta's mayor, welcoming us as a real hometown bank. The day couldn't have been better for Anderson Brothers Bank and the Latta community.

David Anderson, the bank's president and CEO, expressed how pleased with the outcome and community enthusiasm of the expansion into Dillon County and the town of Latta. "We are a very different bank, we serve the whole community," said David Anderson. "We don't just serve the commercial sector. We like the commercial sector and if you need a million dollar loan we're your bank, but if you need small loan and you need a couple of years to pay it off, we're your bank."



Lunch served by Shulers BBQ, Sugar Shack

The Grand Opening ran throughout the day with local legend Dan E Lockemy along with Chase Matthews and Eagle 92.9 participating, followed by lunch served by Shulers BBQ. Sugar Shack kept the excitement going until the end with popcorn, cotton candy and donuts. As we closed with the drawings for the two grand prizes, winners were Freddie Jackson winning the Saffire Grill and Jessica Johnson won the ABB Tailgate Tent. Eagle 92.9 surprisingly donated two tickets to Brantley Gilbert concert that were won by Sherry Vereen.

About Anderson Brothers Bank

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

Anderson Brothers Bank offers 21 branches conveniently located in 14 communities throughout the Pee Dee and Coastal regions of South Carolina with plans for growth in Myrtle Beach area in 2016. The bank's main office is located at 101 North Main St., P.O. Box 310 in Mullins. For additional information about Anderson Brothers Bank, call 843-464-6271 or visit abbank.com.

For more information, contact Susan Grant of Anderson Brothers Bank at 843-464-3551 susang@abbank.com

RUSTY RICHARDSON APPOINTED COO



ANDERSON BROTHERS BANK

MULLINS--Anderson Brothers Bank has announced Executive Vice President Rusty Richardson

has been appointed Chief Operating Officer. This appointment expands Richardson's oversight to include Deposit Operations, compliance, BSA and Human Resources while retaining his current responsibilities in credit administration. Richardson has served in several capacities in his 18 year career with the bank including Marion City executive, chairman of the Audit Committee and chief credit administrator. He also serves on the board of directors of the bank.

"We are fortunate to have Rusty's experience, energy and competence to handle a broad portfolio of vital departments," said David E Anderson, CEO of Anderson Brothers Bank. "He is essential to the future success of Anderson Brothers Bank."

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HISPANICS AT THE FOREFRONT OF DIGITAL BANKING TRENDS



With a population of more than 55 million and estimated buying power of over \$1.5 trillion, Hispanics in the United States are continuing to shape economic trends; however, as new research finds, they're shaping digital trends as well.

This year's Trends in Consumer Mobility Report shows Hispanic consumers are increasingly reliant on mobile devices to navigate daily life. In fact, 35 percent of Hispanics say they are more likely to interact with their smartphone in an average day than anything or anyone else, including their significant other.

The survey, which explored mobile trends and banking behaviors among adults across the country, found this digital lifestyle also extends to how they manage their finances. More than three-quarters (78 percent) of Hispanic consumers use a mobile banking app, and 69 percent cite digital as their primary method of banking. These numbers mark a stark contrast from non-Hispanic users, whose percentages were 51 and 61 percent, respectively.

This survey reinforces what our Hispanic customers show us every day - the Hispanic community leads the way in mobile adoption, usage and engagement and that it was the actions of the Hispanic community that spurred a release of a mobile app in Spanish. They are committed to delivering solutions that meet the needs and behaviors of these consumers.

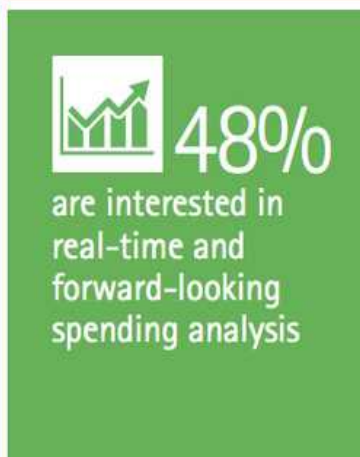
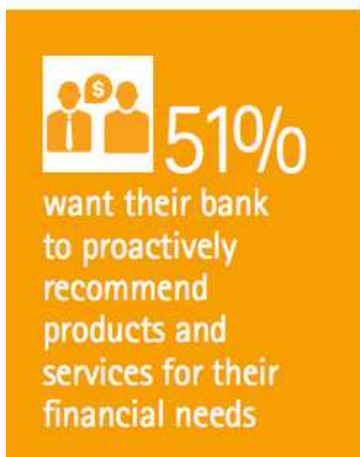
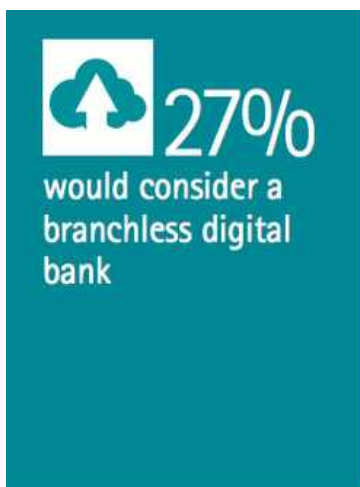
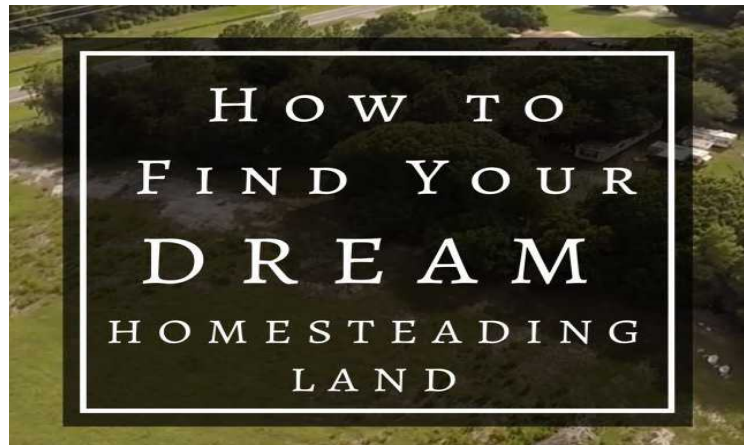
The report revealed further insights into Hispanic consumers' mobile-first mindset:

* Texting becomes the new small talk. Nearly one-third (32 percent)

of Hispanics cite texting as their preferred communications method. The vast majority (80 percent) feel that the appropriate response time to a text is under an hour, and 54 percent text someone when they're in the same room.

* Documenting life moments. Hispanics are more inclined to share events with others, as nearly all (95 percent) say they want to have their smartphone on hand to capture important life milestones. They're also more likely than non-Hispanics to post these life moments on social media (78 percent, compared to 69 percent).

* Growing comfort with emerging payments. More than half (56 percent) of Hispanics would use or already use their phone to make purchases at checkout, compared to just 36 percent of their non-Hispanic counterparts. 77 percent of Hispanics say they're likely to use emerging payment methods such as mobile wallets and social media apps, and 72 percent cite they would use or already use their bank's peer-to-peer payments service.



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As Americans, we can take pride in the fact that we are a nation of givers. And as the economy improves, charitable giving is on the rise. In fact,

according to the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, in 2015 total charitable giving from U.S. individuals, corporations, foundations and bequests exceeded \$370 billion.

But with money still being tight for many Americans, it's nice to know that there is a way to support a favorite charity without having to worry about the impact it could have on your budget. How? By giving the gift of life insurance. Here are just a few ways you can use this proven method to contribute money to your favorite causes:

- **Donate an existing policy**—If you already have a policy and no longer need the death benefit, you can irrevocably transfer ownership of the policy to your desired charity. While the charity will be responsible for any remaining premium payments, it will also receive the full death benefit when you die.

- **List the charity as a beneficiary**—As the owner, you remain in control of your policy and can leave money to as many beneficiaries as you like: children, grandchildren—even multiple charities. Or you can name a single charity the sole beneficiary, and it will receive the entire amount.

- **Purchase a separate policy**—There are times when it makes sense to have separate policies: one for loved ones and one for charitable gifts. This technique can prove especially helpful if you would like to retain ownership of one policy, but not the other.

- **Create a Charitable Remainder Trust:** While this planned-



giving tool is designed to shelter assets such as stocks and real estate, you can also incorporate life insurance if it's set up correctly. Be sure to consult a trust

attorney before pursuing this approach.

Giving life insurance can be a lasting and recession-proof way to support a worthy cause. Depending on the method you choose, it may also offer a variety of tax benefits.

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

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DREAD CANCER SCREENINGS? HERE ARE TIPS ON HOW TO DEAL



You go in for your annual visit, and it goes something like this: You get weighed and measured and prodded. You see your doctor and talk about your health, maybe get a prescription refill, and most likely a referral for a screening or lab test. You walk out with the best of intentions, but you never get that test done. Sound familiar?

Many of us don't love the idea of going in for a colonoscopy or mammogram, and even the idea of a needle stick might make some of us jittery. But when it comes to cancer screenings, those tests can mean the difference between a treatable - even curable - cancer, and one that's far tougher to beat.

In recent years, there's been a trend towards evidence-based medicine - looking at the evidence and deciding what works and what doesn't. The good news is that the medical evidence sometimes points to fewer tests. Here are some of the more significant changes you might notice at your next doctor visit, plus tips on how to make screenings easier on yourself.

What's new for women

If you're still getting annual mammograms, you might be able to have them less often. According to the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), women at average risk of breast cancer need screening only every two years from ages 50 to 74. Everyone's situation is different, so talk to your doctor and together decide what's right for you.

Likewise, most women don't need once-a-year pap tests. According to a 2012 change in guidelines, women ages 21 to 65 at average risk need this cervical cancer screening just once every three years. If you're 30 to 65, you can get a DNA test as well as a pap, which lets you go five years between tests (if your doctor agrees). That said, you'll still want to go in for an annual wellness visit.

What's different for men

Not as much to report here, Guys, but if your doctor is still ordering a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test during your annual exam, you might want to talk about it. In 2012, the USPSTF recommended against routine PSA tests as a way to screen for prostate cancer. A high PSA level doesn't necessarily signal cancer, but could lead to unneeded treatments. While PSA test rates have been going down, a recent study found that around 40 percent of men over age 60 were still getting them.

The latest on colon screenings

If you're between 50 and 75, you probably know that you need regular colon cancer screenings. You have a growing number of options now, and they all generally involve a tradeoff between thoroughness and the length of time between screenings. In particular, more insurance

companies have started to cover virtual colonoscopies (Medicare is a notable exception).

Unlike traditional colonoscopies that use a camera to look inside your colon, a virtual colonoscopy is basically a CT scan (these scans use a series of X-rays to create sharp images). Normal results on an old-style colonoscopy can often get you off the hook for 10 years; the virtual version needs to be repeated every five years.

There are also several simple lab tests that involve collecting a little stool at home and mailing it in to the lab. The newer FIT tests look at immune markers and are more sensitive than older ones. Depending on the test, these need to be done every one to three years.

How to get over your reluctance

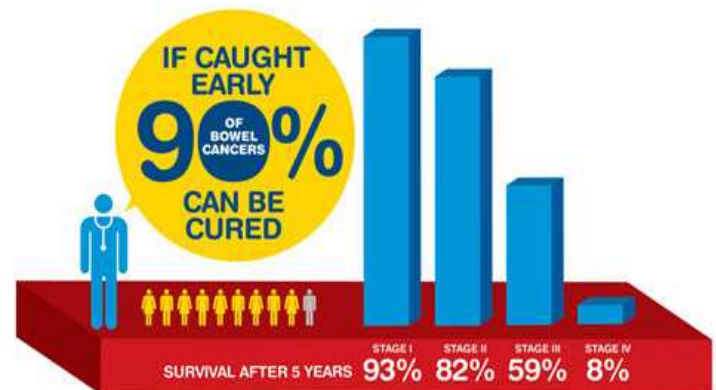
If you're not a fan of getting tested, you're not alone. Millions of Americans aren't getting essential tests, and cancer screening rates are lowest among U.S. Latinos and Asians.

If cost is an issue, you might be happy to know that health plans under the Affordable Care Act must cover most preventive care at no cost to you (no co-pays, deductibles or coinsurance). If you have a plan that predates the 2010 law, your coverage may be different.

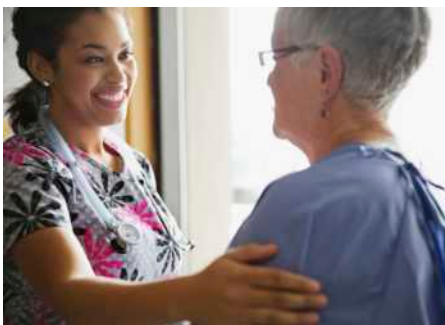
Here are a few simple ways you can make screenings easier for yourself.

- * Ahead of your annual exam, check out which exams and preventive care are recommended for you by visiting getscreenednow.org, a collaboration between Stand Up To Cancer and Rally Health.
- * Schedule your screenings and lab tests before you leave your primary care doctor's office.
- * When picking a day and time, think of how you might feel. Depending on the test, pick time of day that works best for you.
- * On the day of your appointment, take someone along (for some tests you'll be sedated, so you'll definitely need a driver).
- * Make sure you're as comfortable as possible. If you tend to get cold, bring a wrap or take socks.
- * Before you leave, ask when you can expect your results so you're not conjuring up worst-case scenarios while you wait to hear back.
- * Afterward, treat yourself to your favorite little indulgence - you've earned it. Go to a movie, get a pedicure, or have a piece of pie.

Screening saves lives!



KICKING OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH A HEART HEALTHY START



It's a New Year, which means it is an opportune time to focus on your health and wellness. If you or a loved one is living with cardiovascular disease (CVD), you may be dealing with many burdens, including access to medications - an increasingly common problem.

When prescribed a medication by a physician, most individuals expect to receive the medication without jumping through hurdles. However, for many people affected by cardiovascular disease across the country, this is increasingly not always the case. According to Symphony Health Solutions, commercial payers deny up to 90 percent of initial claims submissions for patients with CVD, with the final rejection rate for patients at 73 percent.

Many of these patients who are rejected have high cholesterol and/or familial hypercholesterolemia (FH), which is an inherited form of significantly high cholesterol and one of the most common genetic diseases, affecting at least one in every 200 to 500 people. Thus, these patients are exploring new treatment regimens because they have not been able to get their low-density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C), or "bad" cholesterol, under control despite treatment with a statin-the current standard of treatment. Additionally, many patients living with atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD), which is caused by a build-up of cholesterol-rich plaque in the arteries, are unable to get their LDL-C under control with current treatment options.

With CVD being a major public health concern in the U.S., it is

imperative to lower bad cholesterol for patients who have already had a cardiovascular event, like a heart attack or stroke, as well as patients with FH who require additional treatment options to lower their LDL-C levels along with their statin. Yet, there is a growing concern that many patients with uncontrolled LDL-C levels continue to face challenges in accessing PCSK9 inhibitors their physicians have prescribed based on the approved indication.

While the U.S. Food and Drug Administration carefully determined which patients would be appropriate for PCSK9 therapy given the clinical trial information, many payers have implemented restrictive prior authorization processes using stringent utilization management criteria, which is resulting in many patients being denied access. This is not unique to PCSK9s though; we have seen these restrictive authorization practices affecting patients seeking hepatitis C and heart failure treatments as well.

Being denied access to the medicine you are prescribed is tremendously frustrating and can leave patients feeling hopeless. However, it is important to know that, as a patient, there are certain things you can do to take action if this happens to you:

* **Talk to Your Doctor:** If you are denied access to vital treatment, talk with your physician about what you can do to receive the therapy you need.

* **Share Your Story:** Patients and physicians should feel empowered to speak out and engage with their networks, sharing their stories to help drive attention and awareness to the issue.

* **Engage Advocates:** Seek out advocacy groups and patient networks that have resources.

Make your health a priority for 2017. If you (or a loved one) suffers from CVD, make sure to talk to your physician - or encourage your friends and family - to ensure you or a loved one are receiving the appropriate medical care.

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Submitted by Dr. David Gittens



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NEW HOSPITAL CEO SET TO BRING THE BEST SERVICE TO THE AREA

Submitted by Tu'Meeka Epps



Gary Malaer

Carolinas Hospital System provides quality health care services to the Florence community and the Pee Dee region, and sitting at the helm as the newly appointed chief executive officer is Mr. Gary Malaer.

As CEO, Malaer's role is to listen to the needs of the community, patients, physicians and employees; recognize his vision; communicate the vision; and empower his colleagues to take ownership and execute, creating results. He has worked in hospital operations for almost 20 years, holding various positions

including chief operating officer, as well as his previous position as CEO at Wuesthoff Medical Center in Rockledge, Fla.

The Texas native is excited about the move to Florence and believes it is an excellent opportunity for continued growth in his career. Malaer stated, "Carolinas Hospital System offers a vast array of services to the community, and I am excited to have the opportunity to lead the organization in serving the needs of the people in Florence and the surrounding areas."

In order to serve a community, a leader must recognize the needs of the community through interaction with diverse groups of people who represent a variety of backgrounds. A leader builds trust between an organization and the community, demonstrating commitment to integrity, respect and excellence. As the CEO of Carolinas Hospital System, Malaer is excited to build upon partnerships already established and creating new partnerships through community involvement.

Malaer's top priority is to provide the highest quality of care and services to patients. One of his primary goals is service line

growth. "Whether is it through building awareness of the fantastic services that we already offer, or elevating our capabilities through new technology, training and medical staff resources, I want the service lines that we offer to be the best in the community, the best in the state," said Malaer.

Malaer is aware his desire to push the system forward depends heavily on the staff. "I believe in a culture of teamwork and accountability. I strive to lead by example, and to serve as a resource to my staff. We will hold each other accountable to expectations and goals, and grow together in a supportive and positive environment."

Born and raised in South Texas by a family with roots in farming operations, Malaer learned to work hard and focus on outcomes. In his downtime he is an avid outdoorsman, and his wife Debbie and two wonderful daughters, Brittany (15) and Taylor (12), are the support and balance he needs in his life.

We welcome Gary Malaer and his family to Florence.



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Member of the Medical Staff of Carolinas Hospital System

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH GAURAV PATEL, MD

Submitted by Mark Warrin, CHS Marketing Coordinator



Gaurav Patel, MD

Dr. Gaurav Patel has joined the staff at Carolinas Hospital System after recently moving to this area from Pennsylvania, where he lived for the past eight years. He served at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh where he completed his residency in internal medicine and fellowships in interventional cardiology and cardiovascular disease. He also worked as a hospitalist at Allegheny General.

Patel was born in India and grew up in the town of Vadodara. He moved to Chicago after graduating from medical school at Pramukswami Medical College. During his

years in medical school in India, he served on vaccination teams with the National Polio Surveillance Project, which was sponsored by the World Health Organization. He worked at a blood donation camp in Radhanpur, India, and recruited volunteers. He also served as an intern doctor, providing primary care to patients in rural area camps in Radhanpur.

When Patel moved to the United States to complete his studies and practice medicine, he joined a host of friends and family who were also in the medical field and lived here. "I had a brother and many cousins who lived here and I knew I would have their support and encouragement as I continued my studies," he explained.

Patel and his wife, Rupal, have been married for 10 years and have two sons: Hari, 5, and Keshav, 1. Rupal was a lab technician before they were married, and now she enjoys being a stay-at-home mom. Patel has a brother who is a chemical engineer and lives with his family in Albany, N.Y. and also a sister who works as an accountant in Sydney, Australia. His father and mother are retired and still reside

in India.

The Patels enjoy many things about Florence: "The people are nice and the neighborhoods are nice," Patel said. "I especially enjoy my five-minute commute to work and the lack of traffic. The ocean is an hour away and we can be hiking in the mountains in about four hours. Everything I like and need is here. Florence is a great place for my wife and me to raise our boys."

Dr. Patel and his family try to go home to India at least once a year for an extended visit. "We miss family and friends and our parents and all the festivals," he said. We want all that to be a part of our family's life as much as possible. Dr. Patel attended an English-speaking school when he was growing up and is fluent in Hindi, Gujarati and Marathi.

Dr. Patel is associated with Carolinas Medical Alliance Cardiology and is a member of the medical staff at Carolinas Hospital System. He is accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, please call 843-674-4787.



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INFECTIOUS DISEASES: A MACRO LOOK AT MICROBIAL PROBLEMS

Submitted by Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator, HopeHealth



Dr. Rishika Motiani left and Julio Arroyo right infectious diseases physicians at HopeHealth. Photo by Bradley Lail

One of the most well known infectious diseases of our era is HIV. More than three decades have passed since AIDS first captured global attention and put a name to the epidemic that terrified communities. The epidemic led to the establishment of health clinics and centers dedicated to helping those infected by the virus and, over time, many of these centers have evolved into the specialized departments for treating a multitude of infectious diseases.

An infectious diseases department treats patients diagnosed not only with high-profile infections such as HIV, but also with a range of acute and chronic infectious diseases, from childhood diseases such as measles and mumps, to long-hidden infections such as hepatitis C that present health problems later in life, to rare infections and emerging epidemics such as the mosquito-born virus, Zika.

Board-certified infectious diseases physicians complete an infectious diseases fellowship through the American Board of Internal Medicine in addition to two years of study and a basic three-year internal medicine residency. Their role includes not only treating an infection and its symptoms and identifying the various fungi, bacteria, parasites and/or virus that caused the infection, but also diagnosing how a patient acquired their infections and preventing recurrent infections or transmission. According to Dr. Michael K. Foxworth II, a pediatric infectious diseases specialist at HopeHealth, treatment can be broad and depends on the infection itself. Foxworth said that, in many cases, infectious diseases can be prevented with vaccines and behavioral interventions that interrupt the transmission process.

There are multiple ways infectious diseases can be transmitted. Some diseases are carried through contaminated food and/or water supplies, others by person-to-person contact, insect bites or wounds from animals or other environmental exposures. To combat transmission, physicians identify and treat these diseases, their causes and address prevention issues. Dr. Rishika Motiani, an infectious diseases and primary care doctor at HopeHealth, said the Infectious Diseases Department also works in tandem with other departments, and care is coordinated across specialties that can include pain management, substance abuse, mental health and primary care.

Population health plays a key role in such prevention by helping identify risk factors for specific populations in local communities. By encouraging these populations to have annual checks or procedures that can help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, population health research helps providers address issues directly impacting a community and puts that community on track for better healthcare outcomes. Some examples are early childhood immunizations that prohibit the spread of diseases like measles and mumps; women's health examinations, such as pap smears that aid in the early discovery and treatment of infectious diseases like chlamydia; and targeted issues such as promoting hepatitis C testing for those born between 1945 and 1965.

At community health centers such as Hope Health, the infectious diseases department is also based on an integration of care model encompassing three areas of service: clinical, community and client services.

Clinical services include providing medical care for infectious diseases patients, ensuring clients receive medications and medication education, providing and/or coordinating referrals for additional services such as primary care, behavior health and substance use.

Client services include the coordination of infectious diseases patients' medical and support services to ensure clients receive medication, remain engaged in care and have access to support services, such as transportation, support groups and housing assistance.

Community services include partnering with local community organizations and agencies to provide free rapid HIV and hepatitis C screenings, as well as provide HIV, STD, HCV education and awareness, including evidence-based interventions. Additional services include locating and helping new and former clients re-engage in care.



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THE TRUTH BEHIND 2 'HEALTH' FOODS



Did you dance in delight the first time you heard that dark chocolate is good for you? Did you think that your favorite indulgence just became an official "health food?" Popular culture often makes too much of health benefit claims, especially when it comes to food and drink that many people consider guilty pleasures. It's important to understand it's not always the item itself, but certain components in it that have potential health benefits.

Here is the truth behind two common pop-culture myths:

Dark chocolate is good for you

Wouldn't it be great if every time you bit into your favorite chocolate treat or candy bar you were actually doing something healthful?

Unfortunately, it's not the chocolate itself that's healthy. It's the cocoa flavanols that are found in cocoa beans that are actually thought to be healthful. Numerous studies have demonstrated that cocoa flavanols help to support your health by promoting healthy blood flow.

Consuming your favorite chocolate bar may make you feel happy, but chocolate also contains a lot of things you don't need too much in your diet, like calories, fat and sugar. Plus, the traditional process of turning cocoa beans into chocolate destroys most of the cocoa flavanols, leaving chocolate tasty but without its original good stuff.

Taking a daily supplement that contains cocoa flavanols, such as CocoaVia (R) supplement, is a more sensible way to tap the potential health benefits of cocoa flavanols. The supplement comes in two forms - capsules and powdered stick packs that you can mix into the food or beverage of your choice.

The Food and Drug Administration has not evaluated these claims, nor is the product intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Red wine promotes health

Red wine's claim to fame is largely tied to the presence of a powerful compound, called resveratrol, in the skin of grapes. Population studies have shown that individuals who include wine in their regular diet have better overall cardiovascular health, a benefit that may be related to wine's resveratrol content.

Red wine typically contains some resveratrol, but not much. You would have to drink a lot of wine for many years to get enough resveratrol into your system to see any benefits from it. However, red wine contains calories and alcohol, making it an occasional treat.

But, luckily, red wine is not the only source of resveratrol. If you would like to increase your resveratrol intake, you can more of other things that contain it, such as peanuts, pistachios, blueberries, cranberries and, yes, grapes! These foods are also rich in other beneficial nutrients, including vitamins, minerals and fiber.

It's human nature to wish everything you love to eat and drink would also be healthful. And while there's no denying that a piece of chocolate or glass of red wine can be spiritually satisfying, the reality is a balanced diet, rich in fruit, vegetables, whole grains, dairy and lean protein sources according to the USDA's dietary guidelines, will always be best for your body.



READY FOR WOMEN SEEKING REHABILITATION

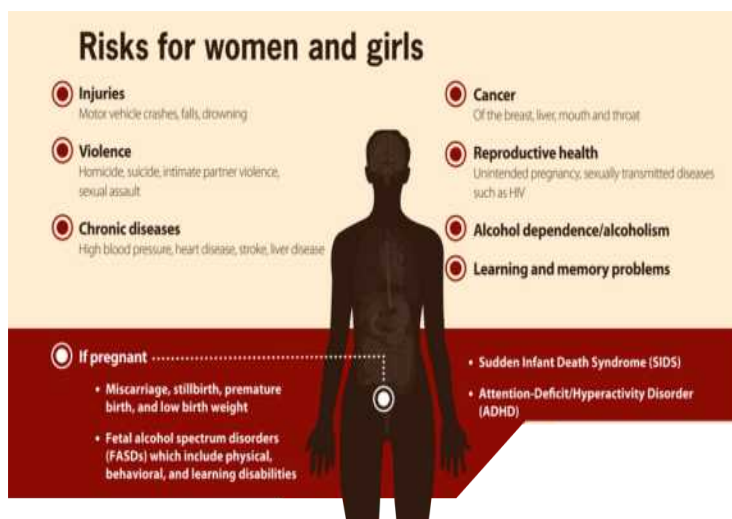
by Mallory Brayboy



Robin Murphy

The Chrysalis Center, a division of Circle Park Behavioral Health Services, is an inpatient treatment center for women with alcohol or drug addiction. The facility is located at 1430 S. Cashua Drive in Florence. Eligible women that enter into the rehabilitation program stay onsite for three-to-four months while receiving intensive counseling and treatment. Mothers may bring up to two children, ranging from newborn to ten years of age, making this a unique resource in our state.

The center has four departments: Women, Children, Residential, and Medical, each with its own supervisor. Robin Murphy has been the center's overall supervisor of Residential Services since September 2016. Some of her duties entail supervising the staff of about 30 employees, welcoming new patients, informing the community about the facility and providing group counseling.



Born on Fulton County Army Base in Atlanta, Ga., with a father in the military, Murphy has lived in multiple states along the east coast, including Georgia, Tennessee and South Carolina. She settled down in sunny South Carolina in 1987. Prior to The Chrysalis Center, she was employed with the Alcohol and Drug Commission in Manning for 16 years. "It was a small agency so you kind of had to do everything. I saw DUI offenders, I did group and individual counseling, saw children...A little bit of everything," says Murphy. Experience in a wide range of areas is not the only thing that makes her fitting for her position. Murphy herself is a recovering individual who sought treatment for addiction. She cites the point that ultimately made her take action and reach out for help as: "When you get sick and tired of being sick and tired."

The Chrysalis Center is an answer to many people's prayers during times of hardship. This past holiday season the center was only one patient away from reaching its capacity. Murphy says this is unusual for the holidays. "A lot of women say they will come after the holidays," she says. "It's a very challenging place for women to be. In the first couple of days it's very common for them to want to leave. We've been trying to work on keeping them hanging in there until their rough period is over."

The center has been averaging about 80 women per year in inpatient services. Treatment is paid for by the women's insurance or Medicaid, with Medicaid covering only the costs of services, not housing. Funding for the center is also provided by the Department of Alcohol and other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS).

Murphy says many women reach a breaking point and sign up for rehabilitation when DSS becomes involved, their children are removed or when legal issues arise. "It shows how powerful addiction is. It'll disrupt and take away your family, and it still will have the power over you to make you use." The Chrysalis Center sometimes sees repeat patients. If a former patient re-applies, they must partake in a phone interview to find out what will be different. "We want to hear some different things from them," Murphy says. The amount of time women stay at the Center is based on their progress, and Medicaid's MCOs also determine how long they'll pay based on ASAM criteria. ASAM involves a woman's physical and mental health, including disorders such as bipolar or depression, their readiness for treatment, relapse potential and the recovery environment the woman is going into after treatment.

The Chrysalis Center has a dedicated team of staff members who are committed to the women and children they see. "The word 'chrysalis' refers to the hard outer casing that surrounds a butterfly when transitioning from a caterpillar," says Murphy. "We like to think of our women as going through this same process while in treatment." At the facility, school-aged children receive counseling, while infants and preschool children learn skill building. Children of parents with substance use disorders often suffer developmentally due to trauma in their lives.

"When you see how far these children come in three months, it's very impressive," says Murphy. Murphy says the most challenging part of the job is when a woman does not successfully complete the rehabilitation process and her children enter back into foster care. "Even if only one family is able to stay together, then we have done what we set out to do," says Murphy.

Robin Murphy can be reached for additional information at 843-664-3971. The main number for Chrysalis Center is 843-673-0660.

What Was I Thinking Buying Alcohol For My Kids And Their Friends?



Nearly 70% of teens will use alcohol before they finish high school. Most of them are getting alcohol from their parents. They're also drinking at a younger age than ever before. Which means they're more likely to be sexually assaulted, exploited on social media, injured or killed in an accident, or become an adult alcoholic.



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CHS – MARION LAUNCHES SENIOR CIRCLE AND HEALTHY WOMAN PROGRAMS

Articles submitted by Morgan E. Holley, Director of Marketing



MULLINS--Recently, Carolinas Hospital System-Marion launched the Senior Circle program to provide people ages 50 and better with an outlet for enjoying their golden years and pursuing an active lifestyle. Members are offered a variety of benefits, including weekly exercise and activity classes, travel, local business discounts, informative newsletters, and health education luncheons. To become a member of Senior Circle at Carolinas Hospital System – Marion, please call 843-431-2079 or visit www.carolinashospitalmarion.com/senior-circle

In November, Carolinas Hospital System – Marion kicked off Healthy Woman, a free program designed to support a healthy mind, body and spirit for women and the families they care for. Quarterly Healthy Woman events will cover physical and emotional health care, as well as financial well-being and spiritual development. To join the Healthy Woman program for free, please call 843-431-2079 or visit www.carolinashospitalmarion.com/healthywoman

Members can access timely health information, receive upcoming event details, and register for future health seminars online.



CHS – MARION WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIAN



Frederick James Hamilton, D.O.

MULLINS--Carolinas Hospital System–Marion welcomes Frederick James Hamilton, D.O. Dr. Hamilton is board certified in orthopaedic surgery, specializing in total joint replacements, arthroscopy, spinal problems, athletic injuries and fracture treatment. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Pre-Medicine from Purdue University and received his medical degree from the University of Health Sciences. His residencies were completed in general surgery

and orthopaedic surgery at Flint Osteopathic Hospital.

Hamilton is associated with Marion Orthopaedic Associates, an affiliate of Marion Physician Services, and is a member of the medical staff of Carolinas Hospital System-Marion. His practice is located on its main campus at 2829 E. Highway 76, Suite 5 in Mullins. He is accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, call 843-431-2280.



DR. CHRISTY PROSE: FOLLOWING HER CALLING TO CARE FOR FAMILIES

Submitted by Mark Warrin, CHS Marketing Coordinator



Christy Prose, M.D.

Dr. Christy Prose grew up in Houston, Texas, and for most of her young life planned on becoming a veterinarian.

All that changed when she entered college and began her studies in international politics. She went on to graduate summa cum laude from Texas Woman's University with a degree in Kinesiology. For the next four years, she worked in exercise physiology at a cardiopulmonary rehabilitation center.

In 2005 she went back to college to obtain a degree in biology. In 2008 she entered Ross University School of

Medicine in Dominica where she earned her Doctor of Medicine degree and graduated with honors. She returned to Houston and completed her residency in Family Medicine at Houston Methodist Hospital. In September of this year, she moved to Florence and joined West Florence Family Practice.

Prose and her husband, Andrew, have been married for 16 years, and she credits him for much of her success in becoming a physician. "His support and encouragement during all my years of study enabled me to be in this position," she said.

Growing up in Texas, her mother was an elementary school teacher and her father was an engineer in the oil industry. Her father grew up in Peru where his parents were missionaries. With grandparents living in Peru and a father in the oil industry, Prose and her sister had many opportunities to travel and made extended visits to Peru, Colombia, Mexico, Belize, Honduras, the UK, France, Germany,

Kenya, Australia and New Zealand.

"My husband and I love the Florence area and especially the people and the lack of heavy traffic," she said. "We're close to the beach and the mountains. I have family in Waxhaw, N.C., and we've already been there for a visit." She and her husband enjoy running, reading, traveling and Texas-style country dancing.

"I know being a family doctor is the calling of my life," she stated. "I'm looking forward to meeting new patients and forming lasting caring relationships with them and also being a part of the Florence community."

Prose is board certified in Family Medicine. She is associated with West Florence Family Practice, an affiliate of Carolinas Medical Alliance. She is accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, please call 843-679-4214.



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Rebekah Gregory

Moving Forward

A Survivor's Journey

Presented by Healthy Woman

Rebekah Gregory is a simple small town woman and mother whose life was forever changed due to the events of the Boston marathon bombings on April 15, 2013.

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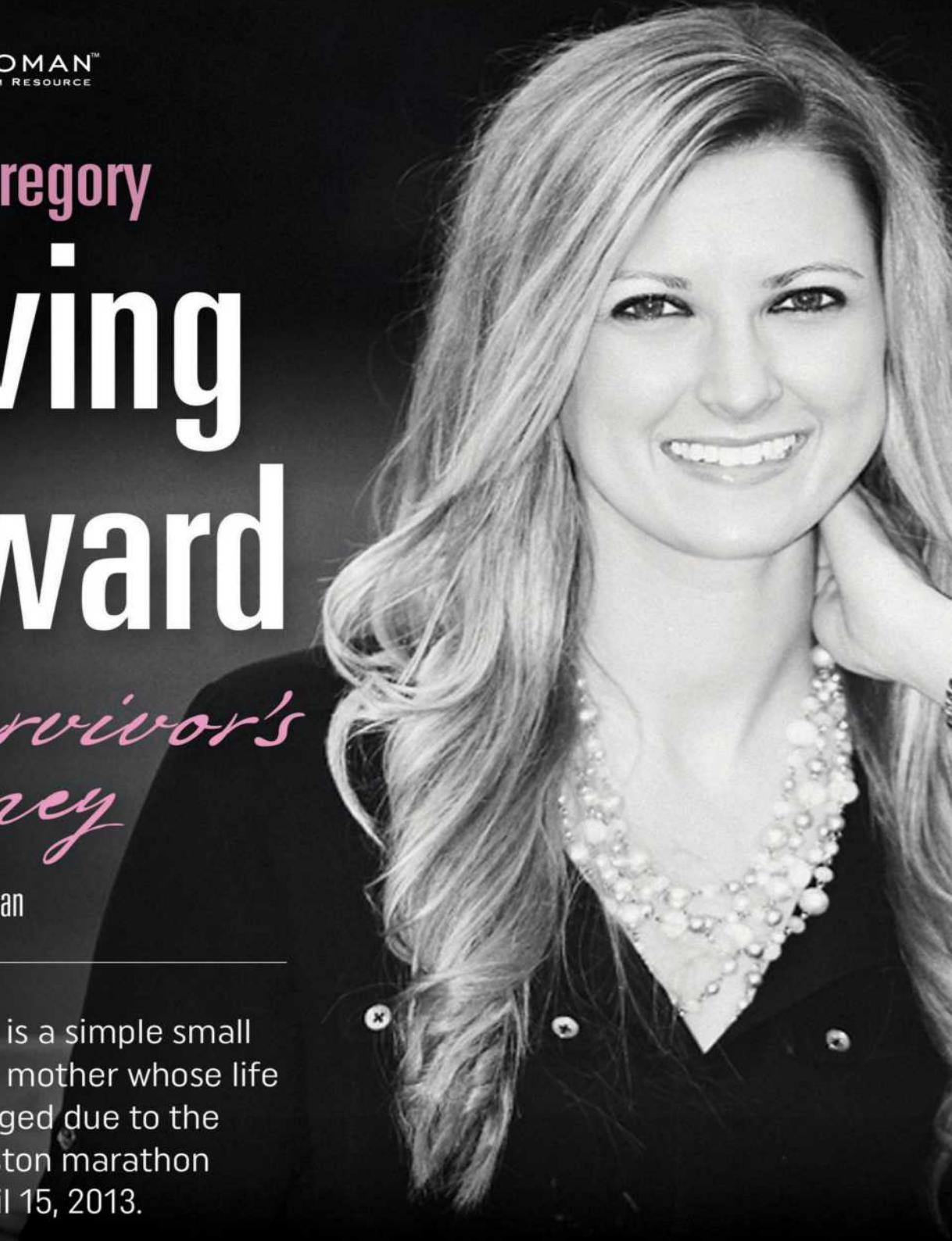
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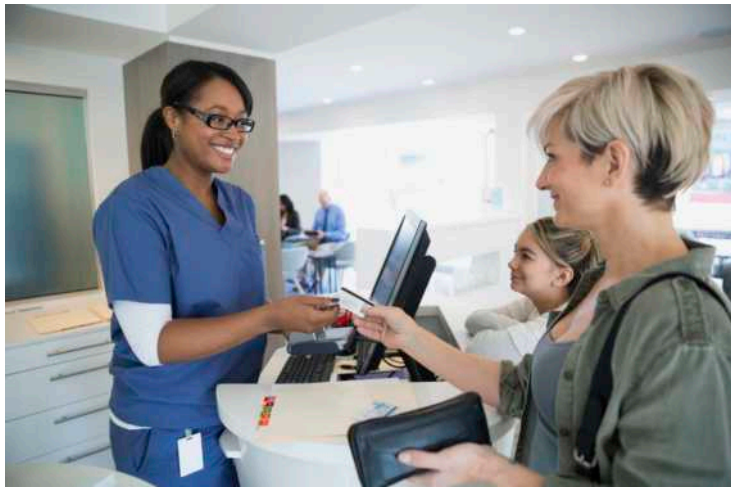
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AN EASY WAY TO SAVE ON YOUR HEALTHCARE IN 2017



If you're like most people, there are a few times a year when you sit down to review your expenses - your cable bill, entertainment expenses and grocery receipts, for example - and try to figure out where you and your family can save money.

One item you should consider is your healthcare costs in 2017. Since the fall season marks the beginning of the annual open enrollment period for employees, now is the perfect time to sign up for a new health benefit plan or make changes to your current plan.



Offered as part of those benefits, Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) are two simple ways for people to save money in the New Year. An FSA, which is provided by your employer, allows you to

save funds for eligible healthcare expenses. An HSA - which you can obtain on your own or through your employer - is a tax-advantaged savings account that allows you to set aside money to cover medical expenses throughout your lifetime.

A major advantage of both accounts is that individuals may use the full amount of their pre-tax dollars toward the care they and their family may need; employees who enroll in an FSA can contribute a portion of their salary pre-tax to pay for qualified medical or dependent care expenses, while an HSA helps individuals with qualifying high-deductible health plans pay for current and future medical expenses.

The number of HSA accounts has risen to 18.2 million in 2016, a 25 percent increase since 2015, according to Devenir Research. In addition, according to the 2016 Flexible Spending Account and Health Savings Account Consumer Research study commissioned by Visa and conducted by C+R Research, 90 percent of FSA users agree that saving money, since contributions are pre-tax, tops their list of reasons for having an FSA. In fact, 40 percent of FSA users claim they would cut back on their medical expenses if they didn't have an FSA.

The study also finds that an FSA with no carryover option represents an important barrier to adoption amongst employees who fear losing their unused dollars at the end of the plan year. 60 percent of non-FSA users noted they would sign up for this benefit if their employer offered the option to carryover up to \$500 of their unused health FSA balances remaining at the end of the plan year.

One of the most convenient ways to access funds in an HSA or FSA is with a Visa Healthcare Card, which allows employees to use funds in their HSA or FSA to pay for qualified medical expenses wherever Visa debit cards are accepted, making it easy to pay for expenses such as:

- *Copays and deductibles
- *Prescriptions
- *Dentist visits: Cleanings, orthodontia, dentures
- *Exams: Physicals, dermatologist
- *Vision care, including exams, new glasses, LASIK
- *Hearing exams and aids
- *Medical equipment such as blood pressure monitors, thermometers
- *Smoking cessation programs

For added convenience, most pharmacies, grocery stores and other retailers that sell healthcare products have the capability to distinguish between covered items and non-covered items when you pay for them, so you don't have to wonder whether something is



covered or not. By using a Visa Healthcare Card at these locations, you no longer have to pay out-of-pocket and then submit receipts to be reimbursed for your medical expenses, saving you time and money!

There's a reason why 78 percent of FSA users surveyed report having an FSA card and why 52 percent of HSA owners surveyed say they use a debit card linked to their HSA to pay for their medical expenses, as the 2016 Flexible Spending Account and Health Savings Account Consumer Research study commissioned by Visa and conducted by C+R Research found. As you review your options this open enrollment season, ask your employer if they offer an HSA or FSA with a Visa Healthcare Card to provide easy access to your funds. To learn more, visit www.visahealthcare.com.



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*Medical professionals may include physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners.

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU WITH FLORENCE'S BIGGEST LOSER

Submitted by Rachel Baggett, Director of Marketing and Initiatives



"McLeod trainer Jimmy Ard takes his Florence's Biggest Loser group through planks during their training session."

Are you completely new to fitness and nutrition and are looking for a way to get started? Or have you tried to get healthy in the past, but need accountability to get back on track? Or, are you just looking for a fun opportunity to lose some weight and help out your community?

Whatever your needs may be, the United Way of Florence County is here to help with Florence's Biggest Loser. Florence's Biggest Loser is part of the United Way of Florence County's Burn & Learn initiative, which aims to bring awareness to the importance of healthy eating and lifestyle choices in an effort to impact the high rates of obesity and related health issues in Florence County. This is the fourth year of the competition, and in the past three years that the competition has been held, 212 contestants have lost a combined total of over 3,850 pounds.

During the ten-week competition, we make sure to provide the contestants with the tools they need to start their healthy lifestyle journey. Contestants who register for Florence's Biggest Loser will receive:

- Free membership to McLeod Health & Fitness Center for the duration of your participation in the contest.
 - Fitness training sessions with McLeod Health & Fitness Center certified trainers.
 - Nutrition counseling from Kitty Finklea, registered dietitian and nutritionist.
 - Additional nutrition and active events throughout the competition such as kayaking, basketball and soccer.
- Losing weight and making healthy habits can be hard, so to help motivate you, we offer opportunities to win over \$1,000 in cash and prizes through the competition. At the end of the competition, we'll award our four big grand prizes, which are:
- \$500 for the contestant with the greatest percentage weight loss courtesy of Health Facilities Federal Credit Union.
 - \$500 for the contestant with the greatest percentage inches lost courtesy of Health Facilities Federal Credit Union.
 - A \$300 shopping spree and makeover from Belk for the contestant who wins The True Grit Award.
 - A six-month membership to the McLeod Health and Fitness Center for the contestant who is voted the Fan-Favorite.

Along with encouraging healthy living, Florence's Biggest Loser also serves as a fundraiser for the United Way of Florence County. All of the funds raised by the registration fees and the fan-favorite voting are added to the United Way of Florence County's annual campaign. The annual campaign financially supports 17 local non-profit agencies that are providing programs that are making a difference in the lives of Florence County residents. In the past three years, Florence's Biggest Loser has raised over \$51,000 for these agencies and their life-changing programs.

To register for Florence's Biggest Loser, go online to www.burnandlearnflorence.com or stop by the United Way office located at 1621 West Palmetto St. in Florence. Registration costs \$160 and can be paid by cash, check, or card. Spots are first come, first serve and registration will close when all eighty contestant spots are filled or on January 16, 2017, whichever comes first. For any questions, please call 843-662-2047 or email rbaggett@uwflorence.org

If you're unable to join, but still want to take steps to create a healthier lifestyle, make sure to keep up with the Morning News and the Community Broadcasters stations during the months of the competition. They'll be sharing stories from the contestants, interviews from the trainers and other helpful, healthy tips. You can also follow Biggest Loser Florence on Facebook for even more workouts, recipes and health-related material.

FEELING TIRED? IRON UP

Submitted by Iris D. Ignacio



Iris D. Ignacio M.D.

Is fatigue slowing you down? Iron deficiency could be to blame. When you're feeling sluggish, your first instinct may be to point at stress. But persistent tiredness that impacts your ability to do your job and spend time with your family can signal a common nutritional deficiency.

Iron and Your Body

Most of the iron in your body — approximately 60 percent — is used to form hemoglobin, a protein your red blood cells use to transport oxygen. Your muscles also use iron to store oxygen. If your iron levels

are low, you may find it harder to complete your regular workouts.

Iron Deficiency: Learn the Signs

You may have an iron deficiency if you notice one or more of the following symptoms:

- anxiety or an inability to focus on tasks
- fatigue and general weakness
- pica — cravings for ice or other unusual, nonfood items
- restless legs syndrome
- sensitivity to cold temperatures

Iron deficiency is more common in younger women than men because women lose iron during their monthly periods. Left unchecked, iron deficiency can cause anemia.

Your Iron Menu

You don't have to rely solely on supplements to get the iron your body needs. Incorporate the following foods into your family's diet:

1. **Fortified whole grains** — According to the National Institutes of Health, some enriched breakfast cereals contain 100 percent of your daily iron needs. Check the labels to find out which cereals offer the biggest iron boost, and replace sugary, less nutritious choices with an iron- and fiber-rich option.
2. **Leafy green veggies** — Here's another reason to eat your salad: A half-cup of cooked spinach offers three milligrams of iron. Other iron-rich veggies include kale, collard greens and broccoli.
3. **Lean red meat** — You may consciously avoid steak, but red meat is one of the best sources of iron and vitamin B12.
4. **Berries** — Strawberries, blueberries and raspberries are rich in vitamin C, which helps your body absorb iron from the foods you eat.

Take Note

Take note of drinks and food that can lower iron absorption/storage: caffeinated beverages, chocolate, excess of high fiber food and some medications like antacids and phosphate salts. Athletes, take note. While all premenopausal women are at risk for iron deficiency, physically active females and males are 30 to 50 percent more likely to have low iron.

Ignacio is board certified in family medicine. He is associated with Pee Dee Family Physicians, an affiliate of Carolinas Medical Alliance, and is accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, please call 843-664-9696 or visit peedeefamilyphysicians.com to request an appointment.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A SENIOR LOVED ONE WANDERS



fears fade.

However, if you become a caregiver for a parent, grandparent or other loved one with dementia, you may find yourself having the same fear if your loved one begins to exhibit a concerning symptom of dementia - getting lost or wandering.

The Alzheimer's Association says six out of 10 people with Alzheimer's experience episodes of wandering. The behavior can take many forms, from leaving the house without telling anyone to leaving and then becoming too disoriented to find their way home. Wandering can also occur at night, when a person with Alzheimer's gets out of bed and wanders inside the house - or more concerning, goes outdoors - in the dark.

"Wandering is one of the potentially most dangerous symptoms of dementia," says Juliet Holt Klinger, senior director of dementia care for Brookdale Senior Living. "The Alzheimer's Association notes that up to half of those who wander will suffer serious injury, or even die, if not found within 24 hours. It's important for caregivers to understand why and how wandering happens, when it occurs and what they can do to prevent or minimize occurrences."

Why wandering occurs

To understand why your loved one may be wandering, look for a pattern, Holt Klinger advises. Does he wander at a particular time of day or night? Is she trying to communicate with you? Do they have an unmet physical or psychological need, like being hungry or thirsty, or feeling lonely? Is an undiagnosed medical problem, such as a urinary tract infection, prompting the person to get out of bed at night?



Sleep patterns change as we age, and those changes can be pronounced and concerning for people with dementia. Your loved one may get up during the night because he or she has trouble sleeping. People with Alzheimer's may wake in the middle of the night and get confused, thinking that it is time to get up and go somewhere, such as work or running errands.

Wandering safety tips

Observing when and why your loved one wanders can help you take steps to keep him or her safe. Common coping strategies for night-time wandering include:

- * Help people with Alzheimer's differentiate between day and night by making sure they're exposed to plenty of natural light during the day. This can help circadian rhythms that dementia disrupts and age-related changes in sleep patterns.
- * Encourage at least 30 minutes of exercise every day, but not

Virtually all parents have experienced the terror of looking up from what they were doing only to realize their child has wandered off. Your pulse races, your heart pounds and you can't relax until your child is back in sight. As children grow up, they learn to stay put - or at least let you know where they're going - and your

within four hours of bedtime. Exercise can keep people more awake and alert during the day, and promote better sleep at night.

- * Discourage daytime sleeping by keeping people with Alzheimer's engaged in meaningful activity. Allow a good balance between activities and rest.
- * Avoid serving alcohol, caffeine or large meals as bedtime approaches.
- * Encourage a bathroom visit right before bedtime.
- * Avoid screen time (white light) directly prior to bedtime and use amber colored night lights which do not disrupt REM sleep patterns.
- * Practice relaxation methods like a short, light massage, warm bath, hot milk or herb tea, or reading aloud. These activities are soothing and can help a person calm down for better sleep.
- * For extreme wandering concerns, consider investing in a monitoring system that will alert you when a loved one gets out of bed at night.

For daytime episodes of wandering, try:

- * Hiding car keys. This can prevent loved ones from leaving the house, getting in the car and losing their way. If your loved one's car operates with a key fob, removing the battery or distributor cap may be another option.
- * Keeping doors locked. Some people with Alzheimer's are unable to operate locked doors. At the very least, a locked door may provide a delay long enough for a caregiver to intervene.
- * Equipping doors with an alarm to signal when it is opened. This can be as simple as putting a bell on the door.
- * Staving off wandering impulses by taking your loved one for frequent walks outdoors.
- * Occupying your loved one with a relatable, doable task that provides a sense of purpose. For example, if someone worked in an office, give her papers to organize. If he loves animals, have him brush the dog.

Sometimes, despite your best efforts and precautions, wandering can remain a concern. If that happens, it may be time to consider a move to a senior living community that specializes in caring for people with Alzheimer's and other dementias. Communities are secured and designed to promote a sense of independence, safety and purpose.

Staying safe:

Wandering and the Alzheimer's Patient



THE 45'ERS: DEMONSTRATING A LIFE OF SERVICE

by Tu'Meeka Epps



Back Row L to R: Theodus Cooper, Willie Mae Jacobs Sanders and Dorothy Mae Hines Brown Middle Row L to R: Janice Stevenson Hawkins, Virginia Mayes Mungo (deceased) and Mary Eucella Singletary, Seated: Gwendolyn White Robertson (deceased)

There was a time when eleven years of high school was the standard to receive a diploma in the state of South Carolina, and the current grading scale was also the norm. I sat down with three beautiful souls who remember, all too fondly, the time I speak of and the year they walked across the stage with doors wide open, leading to the beginning

of the next chapter of their life, which was 1945.

Janet Steveson Hawkins, Willie Mae Jacob Sanders and Mary E. Singletary are members of the 45'ers, a group of individuals who graduated from Wilson High School in 1945. The organization was started when a few of the Tigers decided they needed an outlet which would allow them to be socially active with graduates of the class while creating benevolence projects to benefit the Wilson High School student body and the community. The 45'ers has approximately seven members, five who are local and two out of state in Michigan and North Carolina. They have one active male, Theodus Cooper, who serves as president of the 45'ers organization.

The 45'ers has the distinguished honor of being the graduating class to have ushered in the Alma Mater for Wilson High School: "Lift happy voices praises unfold, hail the Purple and the Gold. Let songs of gladness rise to the sky, for Dear Old Wilson High," and all members possess much adoration for their beloved Wilson. They are from the generation where stern teachers were considered the norm, and the physical building was located on Athens St., not nestled on E. Old Marion Highway as it is today. It was one of the only accredited high schools in the Pee Dee area and served students within a 25-mile plus mile radius (including Effingham, Pamplico, Johnsonville, Hemingway, Marion and Claussen). The 45'ers smiled and laughed amongst themselves as they called upon their memories to help shape and move the conversation along while unfolding the beauty to living a life serving others.



Wilson High School means something different to all who matriculated the corridors, and the same holds true for the 45'ers; however, the common theme seems to be the gratitude for the strength of the teachers encountered which fueled their desire to reach their fullest potential. These three members of the 45'ers continued their education beyond high school at South Carolina State University

and the field of education was their chosen field of service. As educators they played a critical role in the total development of their students

through early childhood development, elementary education and Home Economics; they were assigned the responsibility of equipping the students with academic competence while helping them to become great human beings.

Beyond the classroom, the 45'ers continued to serve the community through civic and benevolence projects. One of the projects created by the 45'ers is a scholarship benefiting students of Wilson High School who may have experienced struggles academically. The scholarship has grown from one \$500 scholarship to two \$1000 scholarships since its inception. This scholarship is given to two students who may not qualify for grade-based scholarship, however, but have been accepted to an accredited college or university of their choice. The 45'ers have partnered with a community foundation to ensure the scholarship will continue to benefit the student body of Wilson High School for many years to come.

The members of the 45'ers are still serving in their community and church while being living testimonies that education is the strongest foundation anyone can build upon with a large helping of faith, perseverance and discipline.



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LEARN FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT THROUGH QUENTIN WILLIAMS

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Quentin Williams

Quentin Williams is a native of Florence and has made a commitment to empowering others to live to the highest of their abilities. Williams is an entrepreneur identifying a need within the community then providing a solution. Through expert information, education and service Williams is equipping future generations with the knowledge needed to springboard them forward and help them avoid repeating the cycle of past financial missteps.

Williams started Quentin Williams Insurance and Financial Group three years ago with the slogan "Helping people make better financial decisions." When asked why he chose the slogan Mr. Williams responded, "I chose that slogan because in my dealings with customers daily, I find most individuals make impulsive financial decisions, or decisions based on inadequate information obtained from family, friends and peers. In some instances misinformation is passed from generation to generation. So my company tries to educate, inform, and break the lifelong behaviors."

Quentin Williams Insurance and Financial Group provides financial education, information and empowerment to people of all ages. Whole/term life insurance, retirement/annuities, entrepreneurial endeavors and senior market products are some of the services offered through the Financial Group.

"Most people fail to understand that life insurance is one of the main tools used in wealth transfer. Life Insurance is not for the deceased, but for those left behind who are dependent on the client's income. Fifty-seven percent of Americans have less than \$500 in savings while seventy percent of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, I feel it's

my responsibility to pass on all I have learned to others equipping them with the fundamental skills to acquire wealth," stated Mr. Williams.

Through personal interaction and conversation Williams will show clients too much credit card debt and limited savings can be major threats to your family's current and future prosperity. Consumer debt can have a negative impact on your future, so it is imperative to find ways to avoid it or eliminate it, helping to build an emergency fund and jump start saving for the future.

Helping people is ingrained in the DNA of Quentin Williams Insurance and Financial Group. It is one of the core values and an integral part of the culture of the business. An important part of planning for the future is protecting it by bringing financial solutions typically reserved for the wealthy to families from all walks of life.

Williams believes that having a solid understanding of the challenges families and individuals throughout the community are dealing with is an important first step to overcoming them: "Trust is something earned through personal interaction, commitment to excellence and exhibiting high morals and values. I hope the readers of this amazing magazine will reach out to me for a one on one conversation and give me the opportunity to earn their trust and their business," Williams stated.

Quentin Williams and The Quentin Williams Insurance and Financial Group are here to serve Florence and all surrounding communities, helping to secure a stronger financial future while promoting financial literacy.



"Helping People Make Better Financial Decisions"



Quentin Williams, Agent
Quentin Williams Insurance
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Stay Connected:



PEE DEE WRITERS TAKE A VOW OF SILENCE

Submitted by Janice Green, Chapter Secretary



LAKE CITY-- Word Weavers International Inc., a national and international organization, is aiding the

launch of a Christian writers group in Lake City. Word Weavers has a unique model for peer manuscript reviews—silence.

Word Weavers' meetings begin with prayer and a time of networking. Members share publishing accomplishments, writing news and information about local writing events and conferences. The core focus of the meeting, however, is on critiques, which are limited to 1,500 words per member at each meeting.

During critiques, peer writers read manuscripts aloud while others follow printed copies. After the piece is read, group members—many of whom are published authors—offer feedback on everything from plotting and character development, to syntax and punctuation. Aside from a short introduction of the piece, the writer receiving critique is not permitted to speak.



Chapter President Shannon Robinson adds, "This is a phenomenal opportunity for individuals to come to learn more about writing, test out their writing skills and have their own work critiqued in a non-threatening Christian environment no matter their

writing experience. Our members are very friendly, and there is an encouraging and respectful atmosphere, perfect for enhancing the writing experience!"

If you are a Christian writer looking for a place to connect with other writers, join us for our launch on January 14, 2017 at 10 a.m. to noon at Lake City PH Church.

To learn more about Word Weavers International Inc., visit www.word-weavers.com

ABOUT WORD WEAVERS

Founded in 1997 in Orlando, Fla., the mission of Word Weavers International Inc. is to help Christian writers improve their craft by critiquing each other's work in an encouraging and professional environment. Word Weavers is a growing organization with chapters launching around the U.S. and Canada. Learn more at www.word-weavers.com

WANT A MEMORY BOOST? TRY A HEARING TEST



Intrigued by all the brain-training products out there to keep your mind sharp and spirits young? You may want to consider something else: a hearing test.

That's right. Mounting evidence links untreated hearing loss to impaired memory and diminished cognitive function. What that means is, if you keep brushing off that suspected hearing loss of yours, your cognition may pay.

Researchers have found that when people with unaddressed hearing loss strain to hear, they tend to do more poorly on memory tests. They may figure out what is being said, but because so much effort goes into just hearing it, their ability to remember what they heard often suffers.

Experts believe this has to do with what they call "cognitive load." That is, in order to compensate for the hearing loss and make out the words, people with untreated hearing loss may draw on cognitive resources they'd normally use to remember what they've heard. Experts say that untreated hearing loss may even interfere with the person's ability to accurately process and make sense of what was said or heard.

In fact, research shows that people with poorer hearing have less gray matter in the auditory cortex, a region of the brain needed to support speech comprehension.

Other research shows a link between hearing loss and dementia. One Johns Hopkins study found that seniors with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop dementia over time than those who retain their hearing. Another found that hearing loss is associated with accelerated cognitive decline in older adults. And a third revealed a link between hearing loss and accelerated brain tissue loss.

Some experts believe that interventions, like professionally fitted hearing aids, could potentially help. The bottom line is we actually "hear" with our brain, not with our ears. So if you think you may have hearing loss, do something about it. Make an appointment with a hearing health care professional, and get a hearing test. After all, research suggests that treating hearing loss may be one of the best things you can actually do to help protect your memory and cognitive function.

The Better Hearing Institute (BHI) offers a free, confidential online hearing check where people can determine if they need a more comprehensive hearing test by a hearing health care professional. Access the BHI Hearing Check at www.betterhearing.org.

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PENSION PLAN FUNDING SHORTFALLS THREATEN RETIREES IN ALL 50 STATES



Everyone knows it is important to save for retirement in order to build a nest egg and enjoy the “golden years.” So why is it that state and local governments many times act irresponsibly when it comes to saving for the future of public employees?

Government pensions are the way in which state and local public employees like teachers, police officers and firefighters receive retirement benefits. Typically, both the employee and the government set aside money each year

to be invested. The investments will, hopefully, grow over time, and both the annual contributions and the investment growth are understood to form the pool of money public employees will be able to use once they reach retirement. That’s the theory.

Unfortunately, according to Unaccountable and Unaffordable 2016, a new state-by state analysis from the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), government pensions are being massively underfunded across the states, and now hardworking taxpayers are on the hook. What is the price tag? Across the 50 states, unfunded pension obligations now total \$5.6 trillion. Now, that number sounds large at a national scale, but what does it mean for the average American? To be exact, this state pension debt equates to an average price tag of \$17,427 for every man, woman and child in the United States.

There are numerous reasons why pension liabilities are so large. For one, the stock market is not growing as quickly as many assumed it would, exiting the recent economic downturn. Therefore, investments for many pension funds are not meeting expectations. The average

pension fund assumes they will earn a whopping 7.37 percent on their investments over the long term. These overly-optimistic assumptions fly in the face of what many financial experts are calling a “new normal” of lower than expected investment earnings in the future.

Another inconvenient truth is that many state governments have failed to deposit the annually required contributions into pension funds every year. The urge to spend more money on other government projects, however well intentioned, has diverted much-needed contributions away from pensions and has contributed significantly to unfunded liabilities.

When pensions are unstable, millions of Americans are faced with an uncertain retirement. However, this is not only a problem for government workers, but it also affects all Americans. Without a sustainable solution to underfunded pensions, higher taxes will be the reality for all hardworking taxpayers.

What’s more, an increasing percentage of state budgets are being drained to pay pension benefits, with less money available for important functions like funding public schools and fixing roads. One especially sobering story comes from Illinois, where since 2009, this trend is so extreme that 89 cents out of every new dollar of education spending has gone to teacher pensions, leaving just 11 cents for salaries, textbooks, building costs and the various in-classroom costs of education.

Pension funding is not a Republican vs. Democrat issue. It’s a retirement issue that affects all Americans. Unfunded pension liabilities will be harmful to the future of workers, retirees and taxpayers alike if forward-thinking policy makers do not tackle pension reform in a timely fashion.

To find out more about how prepared your state is and to see the full report, Unaccountable and Unaffordable 2016, is available at Alec.org/PensionDebt2016.

IT'S A SPRING TO REMEMBER AT THE PAC

Submitted by FMU

Iconic performers will fill the stage at Francis Marion University's Performing Arts Center, March through May. Three legendary performers will rock Florence and the Pee Dee during the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center's "A Spring to Remember."



Lee Greenwood

Lee Greenwood will give the three-month concert run a patriotic kickoff on March 10. The iconic rock group Blood, Sweat and Tears (with Bo Bice) follows on April 6 and multi-talented Grammy Award-winner Rick Springfield will bring his "Stripped Down" tour to the PAC on May 12. Between them, the three acts have sold more than 35 million records, including dozens of chart-topping hits.

Tickets for the all three concerts begin at \$25, meaning a three-event "Spring to Remember" ticket can be had for just \$75. The \$25 tickets are limited for all three shows. Other tickets range from \$42 to \$67, depending upon the show.

Tickets for all three shows went on sale Tuesday, Dec. 13, at noon, just in time for Christmas. Tickets are available online at www.fmupac.org, or in person or by phone at the PAC Box Office (843.661.4444, 201 S. Dargan St., Florence).

Country and pop star Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA" has been an all-American favorite since its release in 1984. The patriotic anthem rose to the top of the charts in 1991 and again in 2001. Buoyed by "God Bless ...", Greenwood's American Patriot album went platinum in just three months following its release in 1992.

But Greenwood is far more than a one-hit wonder. During his dynamic crossover career the California native has seven Number one songs and 25 charted singles, including "It Turns Me Inside Out," "Ring On Her Finger Time on Her Hands," "I Don't Mind the Thorns if You're the Rose," "Dixie Road" and "Somebody's Gonna Love You."



Blood Sweat & Tears

Pussycat, starring Barbara Streisand and George Segal, and was also a headliner at the famous Woodstock music festival.

Blood, Sweat and Tears is still managed by founder and drummer Bobby Columby who notes that the group is not so much about the individual as the aura.

"BS&T has an iconic stature," says Columby. "It's a style of music." The band has changed musicians frequently over the years.



Rick Springfield

Few American rock groups are as well-known as BS&T – Blood, Sweat and Tears – a jazz-rock group that began churning out hits in the late 1960s including "Spinning Wheel" and "You Made Me So Very Happy." The band churned out the soundtrack for the movie *The Owl* and the *Pussycat*, starring Barbara Streisand and George Segal, and was also a headliner at the famous Woodstock music festival. Blood, Sweat and Tears is still managed by founder and drummer Bobby Columby who notes that the group is not so much about the individual as the aura. "BS&T has an iconic stature," says Columby. "It's a style of music." The band has changed musicians frequently over the years. In its current incarnation, the leader singer is former American Idol star Bo Bice. Bice came to the attention of Columby and others for his rendition of "Spinning Wheel" on the show.

Few performers have led as interesting and varied a

career as former teen heartthrob Rick Springfield. During his five decades as a performer he's written and performed dozens of hit songs, written a best-selling book, landed roles in numerous movies and TV shows, and was (and still is) a star on *General Hospital*, one of the longest-running soap operas in TV history.

Musically, Springfield may be best known for his Grammy Award-winning 1981 hit "Jessie's Girl," but the Australian-born entertainer has sold 25 million albums worldwide and had 17 top 20 hits. Springfield's Florence performance will feature an acoustic performance and lots of storytelling.

A Spring to Remember

Three big months at FMU Performing Arts Center

Friday, March 12 – Lee Greenwood

Thursday, April 6 – Blood, Sweat and Tears

Friday, May 6 – Rick Springfield.

Tickets from \$25. www.fmupac.org for more.

For more information, contact Executive Director of Public Affairs Tucker Mitchell at 843.661.1332, 843.409.5587 or cmitchell@fmarion.edu. To download this press release and the accompanying photos, click

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3 TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF WORKING ON A DIVERSE TEAM



Growing up, we're constantly taught to play well with others. Did you know that skill might actually help you land a job? Nearly 80 percent of employers seek candidates who work well on a team, according to a National Association of College and Employers

report. From automotive engineering to business management, odds are you'll work alongside diverse individuals throughout your career.

An article in Scientific American says, with an open-mind, diversity enhances creativity, problem solving and decision-making. That goes for diversity in areas of interest and expertise, as well as race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

The ability to thrive in a diverse environment is essential for job-seekers. In the spirit of self-improvement, here are three tips to help you maximize the benefits of working in a diverse group:

1. Freshen up your news feed.

In today's connected world, information is shared continuously, across multiple platforms, like LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. Access to new ideas, ways of thinking and knowledge is at our fingertips.

To stay smart, you need to follow 400+ accounts on Twitter according to Bloomberg's Tom Keene. Luckily, Twitter allows users to create "lists," where you can curate a group of Twitter accounts in one place. Follow a diverse set of influencers, journalists and business leaders, and you will start seeing daily topics, issues and news from varying perspectives.

Part of being a steward of an inclusive environment is being aware of what is going on in the world and finding out what has worked for others. To succeed, each team needs members from engineering, business and communications departments. Students also represent a variety of races, ethnicities, genders and sexual orientations.

2. Ask questions.

Everyone you meet knows something you don't. Working with others grants you access to different ideas, information and perspectives. The next time your group gets together to work on a project, make a point of asking how each person feels about the project and what gave them that insight or opinion.

As noted by Scientific American, in the same way that a writer and a scientist will approach a problem differently, those different from one another in race, gender and other dimensions bring unique information and experiences to bear on the task at hand. Not only do you stand to learn something, but your members will also likely appreciate you listening and giving them the space to contribute.

3. Embrace open communication.

Effective communication drives positive experiences in diverse workplaces. Use communication as a tool to create an inclusive environment where all students can learn and succeed, regardless of their sex, ethnicity, background or learning style.

Keep lines of communication open with your team by planning weekly get-togethers or creating a group on Facebook.

Are you ready to take the next step? Join organizations that value diversity and inclusion. Most companies, colleges and organizations post a diversity mission statement you can find online. You can also find out where a group stands by asking people already involved in the organization.



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Celebrating History Arthur W. "Man" Stanley



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

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

Sites of Interest

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

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

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

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

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

Historical Museum of Ethnic Culture,
114 Coker St.

Henry "Dad" Brown Memorial Marker,
U.S. 52 and Brockington Road

The Darlington County Cultural Realism Center, 302 Pearl St., hosts an MLK Celebration weekend of events each year culminating in a Noon program on Monday, Jan. 16, at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. Info: (843) 393-9762 or culturalrealismvision.com.



www.darlingtonSConline.com

BRINGING MUSICAL VARIETIES BACK TO SOUTH CAROLINA

Submitted by Florence Convention and Visitors Bureau



The fifth edition of the South Carolina Chamber Music Festival returns Monday, Feb. 20, to Florence with daily performances by world-class musicians through Saturday, Feb. 25.

Italian pianist Dr. Paolo André Gualdi, associate professor of music at Francis Marion University, is the mastermind and artistic director behind the festival, and this year he's landed performers from Russia, Ukraine, Brazil, Bulgaria, Uruguay, China, Italy, as well as the United States, to play at FMU's Performing Arts Center in downtown Florence and the Bean Market in Lake City.

As the festival continues to build momentum and focuses on the primary function of creating a cultural experience in the Florence area, Gualdi said the SC Chamber Music Festival once again will have the level of the Spoleto Festival at a manageable price. It's a "unique little festival" with world-class musicians coming to play intimate performances at the Black Box. "Every night there's something different – incredible variety," Gualdi said. "I think there's a concert for every taste."

The variety in the schedule is what Gualdi said sets apart the festival from others. Throughout the week there'll be plenty of different styles of chamber music ranging from classical jazz, folk and tango, to flamenco.



Qing Li (China)

While Gualdi speaks volumes on each exceptional artist's skill, he said the piano trio on Feb. 23 is not a concert to miss. A recording session of FMU's associate professor of music industry, Dr. Brandon Goff's, world premiere composition will be held with the trio at the studio Wednesday, Feb. 22, and their concert at the Black Box will be Thursday, Feb. 23.

The largest variety will be Tuesday with faculty and guests night, where there will be different combinations of music not only seen daily with schedule but also in the instruments. From horn, voice, percussion, piano, and violin, there will be a multitude of combinations for the audience.



Ciro Fodere (Uruguay)

The festival finale features a "leading member" of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, violinist Qing Li, who is a faculty member of the Peabody Conservatory of Music. Gualdi, who has appeared with many orchestras and played recitals in Italy, France, Brazil, China, Uruguay, and the United States for music organizations such as A. Gi. Mus., AccademiaOri, and Accademia Amadeus (Italy); Universidade Federal do Rio Grande so Sul and Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (Brazil); MuséeWürth (France); International Piano Series of Charleston, American Liszt Society, Cincinnati Conservatory, and the Piccolo Spoleto Festival (U.S.A.), will be performing with her the final night as well.



Carmelo de los Santos (Brazil)

LOCAL CONSTRUCTION COMPANY BRINGING A UNIQUE BREWING EXPERIENCE TO DOWNTOWN FLORENCE

by Les Echols



Billy McBride

Downtown development has been a topic of discussion in Florence and surrounding areas for years. With many downtown businesses coming to fruition in the last several years, the vision of economic development and growth in downtown Florence is quickly becoming a reality. Abandoned buildings and landmarks have become thriving businesses and agencies, and blight has been replaced by renovation and construction. But developing a

downtown area also requires leisurely activities such as food, wine and the arts. One business looking to make an innovative impact is Local Motive Brewing, headed up by Billy McBride. Local Motive is investing over half a million dollars to renovate buildings on Dargan St. in downtown Florence.

McBride has owned Carolina Construction Inc. for the last 15 years. The firm specializes in both commercial and residential construction. Although the addition of a brewery business was different, it was nothing new for McBride. "I began brewing beer in college," said McBride, "and I have been brewing in Florence for the last seven or eight years. Local Motive Brewing is the next step in my passion for brewing, love of beer, and desire to share that with Florence" continued McBride. Part of the reason for the development of Local Motive Brewing is McBride's desire to create an environment for people to have a unique brewery experience in the Florence area, particularly downtown. "The name sort of says it all, and our motivation is to create something local, that is a cool experience and accessible anytime you want," continued McBride.

McBride's excitement is evident every time he speaks about the endeavor, and he shows a strong sense of pride and enthusiasm for the local business: "Support your local businesses."



The city of Florence has a great vision for the development of not just downtown but the entire community. We are excited to be a part of the ongoing efforts downtown. There

have been a number of people who have led the way downtown and made this opportunity possible. We see downtown as the heart of the city. It is already the place we gather as a community for special events, festivals and music concerts. With more businesses moving downtown and people living downtown, that area will feel alive every day," said McBride.

Billy McBride graduated from Cheraw High School and College of Charleston. He lives in Florence with his wife, Karen and children, Wells, 8, and Collins, 4.

Local Motive Brewing is scheduled to open in spring of 2017.



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FLORENCE ALUMNAE CHAPTER DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC...

Submitted by Dr. Tonya F. Mack, First Vice President, Florence Alumnae Chapter and Chair, Jabberwock Steering Committee



Traci Nickia Boatwright

Florence Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., in Partnership with the Minerva Center Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, sponsored Miss Jabberwock 2016. Our theme for the occasion was "One Moment in Time." 12 high school girls were selected by chapter members to participate in its 2016 Jabberwock Scholarship Cotillion. High school girls participated in college prep and etiquette workshops, sisterhood events and fundraising. The culminating event was held on May 14, 2016, at the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center to showcase the talents of the young ladies as well as their formal presentation. At the end of

the event, Miss Jabberwock was crowned, along with the first and second place winners. The cotillion raised over \$41,000 for scholarships to be awarded to the participants once enrolled in college.

Miss Traci Nickia Boatwright was crowned Florence Alumnae's Miss Jabberwock 2016. She is the daughter of Mr. Tracy Boatwright and Rev. & Mrs. Michael and Nicki Spears. She is a junior at Mayo High School for Math, Science and Technology. Miss Jabberwock was escorted by Master Decobie Durant, son of Mr. Landis Perry and Ms. Tomesa Durant.

Miss Dymond Mashell Nettles is our first runner up for Miss Jabberwock. Dymond is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick and Mashell Nettles. She is a senior at West Florence High School. She was escorted by Master Aikeim Sutton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Poole.

Miss Autumn Cierra Scott is our second runner up for Miss Jabberwock. Autumn is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Spencer R. and Tracey Scott. She is a senior at Trinity-Byrnes Collegiate School, Darlington. Autumn was escorted by Master Frederick Sparks, son of Mr. Freddy Sparks and Ms. Angela Hawkins.

This year's pageant also featured:

Miss Ebonie Danielle Burgess, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Anthony and Vanessa Burgess. Ebonie is a senior at Wilson High School. She was escorted by Master William Culpeper, son of Ms. Cathy Jones.

Miss JaQuanda Ronesha Cooper, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jermaine and Rochelle Cooper. JaQuanda is a junior at Wilson High School. She was escorted by Master Marcus Hennigan, son of Ms. Jennette Hennigan.

Miss Christina Michele Gordon, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Kim Gordon. Christina is a senior at South Florence High School. She was escorted by Master Brian Isaiah, son of Mr. and Mrs. Chaun and TaJuana Isaiah.

Miss Jasmin Alyse Harrell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James and Veronica Harrell. Jasmin is a senior at Mayo High School for Math, Science and Technology. She was escorted by Master Christopher Stallings, son of Ms. Dolores Williams.

Miss Chelsy Olivia Harris, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver and Mamie Harris. Chelsy is a senior at the South Carolina Governor's School for Arts and Humanities. She was escorted by Master Trebor Wilson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Tanysha Wilson.

Miss Sarah Marshay Cierra Johnson, daughter of Ms. Shandra R. Johnson. Sarah is a senior at Wilson High School. She was escorted by Master Jalen Paige, son of Mr. and Mrs. Darryl and Angel Page.

Miss Zhadaisa Antionette McDuffie, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James and Shameeka McDuffie II. Zhadaisa is a senior at Florence Christian School. She was escorted by Mr. Derek Stewart, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bernie and Daphne Stewart.

Miss Kayla Gabriella Wilson Roberts, daughter of Mr. Bobby Roberts and Ms. Tonya Wilson. Kayla is a senior in the IB Program at Wilson High School. She was escorted by Master Frederick Jamar Wilson, son of Ms. Joi K. Wilson.

Miss Jakayla Cornise Taylor, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jackie and Joyce Taylor. Jakayla is a junior at West Florence High School. She was escorted by Master Alphonso Little Jr., son of Major and Mrs. Alphonso and Josie Little Sr.



Traci N. Boatwright



Ebonie D. Burgess



JaQuanda R. Cooper



Christina M. Gordon



Jasmin A. Harrell



Chelsy O. Harris



Zhadasia A. McDuffie



Sarah M. C. Johnson



Dymond M. Nettles



Kayla G. Wilson Roberts



Autumn C. Scott



Jakayla C. Taylor

Jabberwock is a competition that originated in 1925. It has since evolved into a Delta tradition. The program now represents an event of sophistication and entertainment that showcases the talents of the participating young women while advancing the goals and objectives of Delta's scholarship initiatives.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. was founded in 1913 on the campus of Howard University to promote academic excellence; to provide scholarships; to provide support to the underserved; to educate and stimulate participation in the establishment of positive public policy; and to highlight issues and provide solutions for problems in communities. Today, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority has more than 900 chapters worldwide and has initiated over 250,000 members. The Sorority uses its Five-Point Programmatic Thrust of Economic Development, Educational Development, International Awareness and Involvement, Physical and Mental Health, and Political Awareness and Involvement to create its national programs. For more information on the local chapter or Jabberwock, please go to www.florencealumnaedst.com

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EPSILON CHI OMEGA RECOGNIZES EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG WOMEN

Submitted by Shadaris Bradley, Reporter



From left to right: Debutantes Kylie Pearson, Carisma Murray, Rayna Mack, Tatyana Brown, Maria Allen, Conner Lane, Faith Oglesby, Mykel Barno, Nia Mearite, and Alexis West

Epsilon Chi Omega Chapter, Florence, presented its 53rd Cotillion Pageant in November 2016 at the Strive Hard Educational, Recreational and Enrichment Center (SHEREC) on the campus of New Ebenezer Baptist Church. This signature scholarship program, sponsored by the chapter, recognizes young women in surrounding communities who exemplify impeccable character, morals and educational achievement. The theme of the Cotillion was “Cultured Pearls: Rare and Unique.” Wilson Anne Addison, chapter president and Florence School District One educator, served as Mistress of Ceremonies.



Miss Conner Lane was crowned Miss Debutante 2016

Ten extraordinary young ladies were recognized for their outstanding academic performances, remarkable talents, and their unselfish service to the Florence/Darlington communities during the cotillion. Prior to the cotillion, these young ladies participated in a variety of activities designed to broaden their experiences intellectually and culturally.

The ten “Cultured Pearls” were from Florence, Darlington and Marion. The Debutantes were as follows from left to right:

Debutante Kylie Pearson is the daughter of Mrs. Antoneia Kirby and Mr. Kali Pearson. Kylie, who is a junior at Darlington High School was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Tremayne E. Johnson III, the son of Mr. and Tremayne E. and Mrs. Michele Johnson.

Debutante Carisma Murray is the daughter of Mr. Kevin and Mrs. Tiffany Murray. Carisma, who is a junior at Wilson high School, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Tyler Johnson, son of Miss Wonza Johnson.

Debutante Rayna Mack is the daughter of Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Tonette Mack. Rayna, an early graduate of Wilson High School and freshman at Francis Marion University, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Cameron Hall, the son of Ms. Sheila Ann McCray and Mr. Bobby Hall Jr.

Debutante Tatyana Brown is the daughter of Mr. James and Mrs. Vanessa Brown III. Tatyana, a senior at Wilson High School, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Larryon George, the son of Mr. Larry and Mrs. Sandra George.

Debutante Maria Allen is the daughter of Mr. Garnett and Mrs. Palmer Allen. Maria, a senior at South Florence High School, was presented by her uncle, Mr. William Johnson. She was escorted by her brother, Mr. Theodore Allen. Maria is a senior at South Florence High School.

Debutante Conner Lane is the daughter of Mr. Conyers and



From Left to Right: First Attendant: Miss Maria Allen, Miss Debutante 2016: Miss Conner Lane, Second Attendant: Miss Faith Oglesby

Mrs. Myretta Lane. Conner, a senior at West Florence High School, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. James Austin Haynes, the son of the late James D. Haynes II and Mrs. Andromeda (Angie) Haynes. **Debutante Faith Oglesby** is the daughter of Mr. Dallas and Mrs. Darlene Cantey. Faith, who is a senior at Marion High School, was

presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Kyle Burns, the son of Mr. Darryl and Mrs. Felicia Burns.

Debutante Mykel Barno is the daughter of Mr. Dwayne and Mrs. Shana Harrell. Mykel, who is a senior at Darlington High School, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Nicholas Johnson, the son of Ms. Nia Johnson.

Debutante Nia Mearite is the daughter of Ms. Lakeisha Mearite and Mr. George Frazier III. Nia, an early graduate of Wilson High School and freshman at Coastal Carolina University, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. Derek Martin, the son of Mr. Derek and Mrs. Tangy Martin.

Debutante Alexis West is the daughter of Ms. Kimberly West and Mr. Lavern Gardner. Alexis, a senior at Darlington High School, was presented by her father. She was escorted by Mr. KeShawn Milling, the son of Mr. Corey and Mrs. Stacey Milling.



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