

DIVERSITYWORKS

JULY 2017 VOLUME 7 ISSUE 3

"For All of Us"



DR. SHERRI RESTAURI



NICOLE COGDELL-QUICK



ZIAD G. SKAIFF, M.D.



R. STANTON TUCKER

THE VISIONARY
PROPELLING THE CITY

ONLINE EDUCATION
AT CCU

ENCOURAGING OTHERS
THAT RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE

LIFE
AFTER CANCER

SUCCESS
IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT

FEATURING:
COVER PHOTO: SCOTTY DAVIS
CITY OF FLORENCE

HONDA

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



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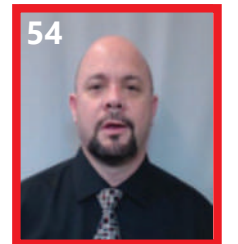
Fran Willis
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Audril Brown
The Inn at the Crossroads



Gabriel Cardona
HopeHealth

Published By:



1951 Pisgah Rd., Suite 111 • Florence, SC 29502
Business: (843) 669-5929 / (843) 413-2743 • Mobile: (843) 307-5146
Website: www.diversityworkssc.com
www.dmmadvertisingandmarketing.com
Email: dmmadworks@aol.com



STAFF:

Diana M. Murphy	CEO/Publisher
Gregory Eaddy	Production Coordinator
Rennie Lunn-McAllister	Executive Editor
Dawn "D.A." Goodwin	Interim Editor
Dewana Cooper	Designer
Chinel Boateng	Contributing Writer
Anna Bowman	Contributing Writer
Mallory Brayboy	Contributing Writer
Les Echols	Contributing Writer
Ta'Meeka Epps	Contributing Writer
Robin L. Lewis	Contributing Writer
Donna SantiAnna	Contributing Writer
Kim Williams	Contributing Writer
Terry James	Photographer

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

EXCELLENCE IS HEADED YOUR WAY



Dawn "D.A." Goodwin
Interim Editor

You know, I never took the time to introduce myself. Because I'm the type of person who loves a great read, especially one I can actually gain something from, working for a magazine has been a dream of mine for quite some time. Of course, I've edited my share of essays, books, and magazine articles in the past, but this is my first real opportunity to edit a magazine in its entirety. Therefore, I am stoked and honored to act as

interim editor for Diversity Works Magazine©.

Editing and writing are two activities I'm extremely passionate about and have been doing for several years now. And you might call me "nerdy" or "weird" after learning this, but that's okay. I admit it. I have a problem...I have the tendency to automatically mentally edit whatever I'm reading, whether it's an e-mail from a co-worker, a headline on a TV news alert, a post on social media, or an article in any magazine. That's a bit different, right? But that's just me.

And that's enough about me.

This magazine is all about you, our dedicated reader, so we hope it finds you healthy, high-spirited, and sheltered from the sweltering heat outside. Now while we can't do anything about the weather, and we know that life will never be perfect, we do, however, have some articles that can make your situation better regardless of what you have going on.

But let's be real for a moment. Way too often throughout the years, I've heard people complaining about "the way things used to be and still are" or "the way things will be in the future." Maybe some people don't feel as if they're being treated equally on the job. Maybe they are complaining about no descent jobs being in the area. Maybe they're complaining about education. Maybe they have health problems and need to be informed about how to improve their health. Just think about it. As a people, as a community, we hear the complaints, but are we adding to the problem and disregarding or disabling the solutions? Or are we becoming the change agent needed for future progression?

Thankfully, I'm here to say that in this publication we feature people and companies that are a part of the solution to many of the problems individuals might be concerned about. The word "excellence" seems to be the proper theme because what we bring is nothing short of it. Not only do we bring you all of the information that you need to have excellence in your life, but we also bring to you our cover story on Scotty Davis, the general services manager for the City of Florence, who has had his hands in driving much of the greatness that exists in the community. This featured leader is working towards bringing excellence into our lives, and he's been doing so for the past 20-plus years. Be sure to stick around and read his story to learn some new things about him that you probably would have never guessed.

We have a wonderful mixture of articles on various topics ranging from soft skills for job interviews to ways to be an inclusive leader to stories about amazing individuals who bring

diversity in spirituality, like Robin Lewis and Reverend J. Derrick Cattenhead. Join us as we celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with Gabriel Cardona and Blanca Blum. We also show appreciation for our artists and appreciation for our recreation and local tourism. Health-wise, we have McLeod, CareSouth, Carolinas Hospital System, GE Healthcare, and several others bringing you healthcare news, updates and events.

Business-wise, read on to learn about how Dr. Steven Jones and his company, JONES, have been working with Honda of South Carolina for years. Find out about the customized diversity and inclusion strategies they teach associates and company leaders alike. Other area businesses you'll find in this issue include KPI Fusion as Joyce Hill warns companies of how costly workplace conflict can be; the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce, which will soon host a Women's Leadership Symposium; The Inn at the Crossroads, whose sales manager, Audril Brown, is one of the best talents in area hospitality; and Johnson Controls, which has a new plant manager named Mara Caldwell who is bringing a transparent leadership style.

Don't worry, we don't leave out people who are here for entertainment purposes. Stay in the know of what's going on in the area, like the TEDxEvansStreet event coming to Florence soon. Then stick around to find out what we mean by saying that M&L PREMIUM VALET is now at your service.

We really have your entire lifestyle covered. Arthenius Jackson of Hartsville speaks out on sexual abuse, R. Stanton Tucker reveals his new book about success, and key retirement milestones are revealed. Financially, keep reading to get in the know of what programs SPC Credit Union and ArborOne offer as well as what Anderson Brothers Bank has been up to lately. New York Life advises companies about a benefit they can offer employees when raises are not an option.

Read articles on schools from GSSM and the Marion County School District, to Florence School District One and area colleges such as Coastal Carolina University, Francis Marion University and Florence-Darlington Technical College, as well as other schools. Also, check out which local teachers have been awarded lately for their contributions to education.

And there's still so much more here.

Overall, you'll find that what makes this particular issue so special is the fact that it's for everyone. We want you all to be entertained, informed, and motivated. We want excellence for you and your family, and in all aspects of life. Cheers to you for taking the first step in achieving excellence--by opening up Diversity Works Magazine©. Remember, while we can strive for perfection but may never obtain it, we can, however, strive for excellence and will one day gain it, but only if we keep on trying. Enjoy!



FOOD LION/DELHAIZE AMERICA DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IS OUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Submitted by Delhaize America Diversity & Inclusion Team



The Diversity & Inclusion Team at Delhaize America: From left to right in the photo are: Karen Harrill, Garland Scarboro, Millette Granville, Matthew Coons, Vanity Oakes

SALISBURY, NC - Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) is critical to Delhaize America's business and it's reflected in everything we do. From associate engagement and development, to community outreach, increased sales performance and the industry-wide recognitions, D&I continues to play a positive role in making our company a better place to work and shop.

Delhaize America, which is comprised of Hannaford Supermarkets in the northeast and Food Lion grocery stores in the southeast, is comprised of more than 96,000 full-time and part-time associates. We understand that our differences are what make us stronger together. We have various business support groups, councils and other programs to support D&I in the workplace.

In fact, Delhaize America currently has 12 active Business Resource Groups (BRGs) which support professional development, business development and community outreach. D&I learning programs are also offered, which include Transgender Inclusion in the Workplace and Unconscious Bias training sessions. Additionally, we offer associates the opportunity to participate in external development programs through partnerships with diversity-focused organizations, such as the Executive Leadership Council (ELC), Network of Executive Women (NEW), Regional Minority Supplier Development Councils and more.

Because we like to know how we're doing, we engage associates with our company-wide Associate Engagement Survey, which is an invaluable tool that enables us to receive feedback from all associates. Associate participation in the survey in 2016 surpassed the prior year by 6.4 percent, yielding our highest participation rates to date.

The D&I team works tirelessly in partnership with our BRGs to provide meaningful feedback in order to impact the business, from product assortment to retail services. **EXAMPLES INCLUDE:**

- The African American BRG has worked with Category Management to provide insights to improve the in-store selections of Ethnic Haircare products, causing a 17.1 percent sales increase.
- The FRIENDS BRG worked with Category Management to provide LGBT Greeting Cards in stores.

At Delhaize America, Diversity & Inclusion is important to all aspects of our business, including suppliers and communities. The company has partnered with several local diverse owned businesses like **Pride Communications Inc.**, a PR and marketing firm; **Scott's Sauce Company Inc.**, a tangy BBQ sauce; **Network Cabling Systems Inc.**, installation and design of cabling systems; **TWT Distributing Inc.**, distributor of ethnic health and beauty care products; **Rikko's Inc.**, direct store delivery of snacks Latino snacks; **Kimbee's Inc.**, ready to drink bottle teas and boxed teas; **Walter B. Davis Company Inc.**, commercial construction and building maintenance; **Electro Micro Security Systems Inc.**, security-related products and services; **Dream Builders, Inc.**, public relations, marketing, event planning, mentoring, and communications services; **Black Business Ink and**

DMM Advertising and Marketing, magazine publications, advertising & marketing; **The Chronicle and The Charlotte Post Publishing Co.**, newspaper publications, advertising & marketing; and others. "We have supported diverse suppliers within our supply chain for over 20 years and will continue to provide education and identify opportunities for growth of diverse businesses," said Garland Scarboro, manager of Diversity & Inclusion at Delhaize America. "Business opportunities with diverse suppliers enhances our product and service offerings and keeps our diverse customers satisfied, while helping to grow the communities we serve."

In addition, Delhaize America is proud to partner with diverse community organizations across our operating area in support of numerous diversity-related events, and we are the Official Supermarket Partner of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA). We have donated more than \$4 million towards scholarships for students at CIAA schools and provided opportunities for high-performing students to participate in our early talent programs.

We also provide hunger-relief efforts through Food Lion's hunger-relief platform, Food Lion Feeds. We have opened and stocked food pantries on four CIAA campuses, to include Livingstone College, Johnson C. Smith University, Winston-Salem State University and Virginia State University.

"At Delhaize America, we believe that diversity and inclusion creates a distinct competitive advantage and can produce a more innovative and customer-focused organization," said Millette Granville, director of Diversity & Inclusion at Delhaize America.

In closing, Delhaize America is proud of the work it has done and continues to do to ensure our company is a "best place" to work. In fact, we recently received a 100 Rating on Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index (HRC CEI) for 2017, the eighth consecutive year for Food Lion and the sixth consecutive year for Delhaize America. This designation acknowledges us as one of the Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality. We were the only retail grocer to achieve a 100 rating in 2017. In addition, Delhaize America received a 2016 ERG & Council Honors Award from PRISM International for our Business Resource Groups (BRGs), which were ranked 14th among the top 25 in the United States, earned placement on a 2017 Diversity Inc. Specialty List, selected as one of the winners of the Best of the Best from the National Business Inclusion Consortium (NBIC), and selected as a finalist in the Business Impact category for the 2017 Above and Beyond Awards at Diversity Best Practices' Network + Affinity Leadership Congress (NALC).

FOOD LION



DROPPING BAKING JEMS IN THE SOUTH

by Anna Bowman



Tamara Eckles

ATLANTA - In 2010, Tamara Eckles needed a creative outlet for her passion for baking which led to the creation of her business, "Jem of the South," a website dedicated to the baking enthusiast in all of us. "My initial dream was to open a bakery," said Eckles, a dream she still holds dear to her heart. "Opening a bakery is still a possibility, but learning about blogging and sharing recipes online was the route I ended up taking," said the dessert entrepreneur.

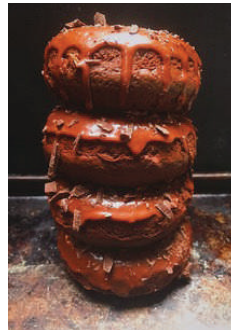
Like so many little southern girls, Eckles was introduced to baking by watching relatives in the kitchen prepare their favorite recipes to share with family members during dinner time and special occasions. Describing herself as a "self-taught baker," she can still recall the memories of the first time she was assisted by her aunt to create her first ever dessert.



Old Fashioned Southern Pound Cake

"My Aunt Ruth helped me bake my first peach pie," an enthusiastic Eckles recalled. She was also influenced by her late maternal grandmother, Janie. As a teenager, the very first dessert she made from scratch was a red velvet cake, and she's proud to say that she still makes this cake for her family every Christmas. "It's a family favorite," beamed Eckles.

Eckles, a South Carolina native, wanted to create a website where she could interact



Chocolate Espresso Doughnuts

with her followers to help engage them in the process of baking mouthwatering desserts by offering them step-by-step directions on how to create a variety of desserts for their very own special guests. "Jem of the South," which is named in part to honor her beloved grandmothers, Janie and Mary, is like a private tutorial for bakers. From preparation, to baking, to presentation, she guides her followers from start to finish in preparing their very own "scrumptious" desserts. Blogging about her recipes is just the icing on the cake

for her website.

In recent years, Eckles has expanded her Dessert Media Empire to include Jem Radio, where she interviews and spotlights other entrepreneurs. Eckles, who learned her entrepreneurial skills from her father, is excited about becoming a published author of her very own cookbook. "I love the opportunity to expand my 'dessert brand' and turn my recipes into a tangible cookbook that my followers can share with their loved ones." So, it's not a surprise that she loves hosting live events for her Jem followers to attend, sample delicious dessert recipes, and network with other Jem followers. She is extremely excited about planning for her future tasting and book-signing events once her cookbook is released in 2017.

Eckles, a Florence native, is a graduate of Clemson University with a degree in economics. She invites dessert lovers to visit her website, www.jemofthesouth.com, or follow her via social media @jemofthesouth, on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Pinterest.



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MAGNIFICENT MARION

by Kim Williams



Al Blake

MARION-The non-profit Historic Marion Revitalization Association (HMRA) was established in 1995 and continues to be committed to supporting the community while maintaining the charm of a small southern town. Al Blake, life-long resident of Marion, serves as the executive director for the association.

He graduated from Charleston Southern University with a business degree and returned home to begin his career in banking. This led to accounting work for a Marion textile mill as well as working in the Marion County School District from which he retired. Over the years and through the various positions Blake held in the community, he was able to recognize the decline that often occurs in many small towns across America. This was not something that he wanted to happen in Marion. He chose to volunteer his time and become more involved in his hometown HMRA was the organization that he believed would help turn everything around.



The mission of this organization exists with hopes to empower residents and business owners with the knowledge, skills, tools and organizational structure necessary to revitalize the downtown neighborhood commercial district and city into a vibrant center of commerce and community.

Blake recognizes that it takes city and county organizations working together to move forward. The HMRA has also begun cross-promoting events with its sister communities in the county to boost awareness and attendance for all.

These are some of the recent happenings in the heart of Marion:

The Main Street Commons is a venue where many special events are held and allows the community to come together. The HMRA was able to complete this project during the summer of 2016, following receiving a grant and many fundraising efforts. There was going to be an official dedication of this multi-use green space on Oct. 7. However, Hurricane Matthew arrived and caused it to be rescheduled for November 23. Although that date was just before Thanksgiving, there were many



Payback Playback

people who were able to participate because of being home for the holiday.

On May 13 the Revitalization Association held their annual fundraiser called Payback Playback. Three performances were featured at the Main Street Commons, as well as a Low Country Boil. Unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate, and rain

came just after the main performance, resulting in a lower number of attendees.

Feb. 25 was the second year that the HMRA hosted the Swamp Fox Chili Cook-Off as a fundraiser celebrating our county and city's namesake, General Francis Marion. It is unique because other Marion non-profit organizations were invited to sell tickets for the chili tasting. The more tickets each group sold, the more its organization received monetarily. The only stipulation was that the non-profit was to provide



Judy's Flowers: Candlelight a nice shot of the 200 Block



Rise and Shine Monthly Gathering with Merchants and Community



Raspberries and Thyme Owner & Staff

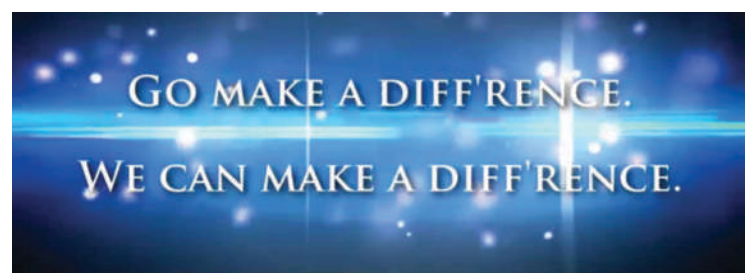
at least two volunteers to assist with the event that day. The cook-off, as well as entertainment, and a corn hole tournament were all held on the Courthouse Square and Main Street Commons. The HMRA hopes to continue to see it grow and expects around 2000 attendees next year.

The city of Marion has created an excitement and pride in business owners since the completion of the Main Street Commons. Marion has had two businesses relocate on opposite sides of the Commons, which has added an extra appeal to that block of Main Street. Those two businesses, Judy's Flowers and Candlelight Gifts, have added value to that block of Main Street. Residents anxiously await another business owner to open soon in this block. In addition, the 200 block on Main Street offers Raspberries and Thyme Restaurant, Magnolia's on Main Antiques, the Swamp Fox Vape Shop and Sweet

Pink Treats, all of which are wonderful to experience.

You may be asking, how can I get involved? The Historic Marion Revitalization Association has an annual "partnership" drive, which is ongoing. Thus far in the year, membership has been average in comparison to previous years with 150 partners (including both individual and business partners). We have another push soon to call on some we've not heard from yet about joining our team, and we always try to solicit for new partners at sponsored functions that we host throughout the year. If you would like to contact or connect with us for more information, you may visit our Historic Marion Revitalization Association page on Facebook, 103 East Dozier St., email hmra@theswampfox.org, on the web at www.theswampfox.org, by telephone at 843-423-9918, or on Twitter- twitter.com/HMRAsc.

Our exposure through social media platforms is lending a hand to us getting the word out that we are Historic Marion Revitalization Association, and **WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE.**





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Discover the art of downtown at www.visitlakecitysc.com



THE INN AT THE CROSSROADS

by Anna Bowman



Audril Brown, Sales Manager

LAKE CITY – Nestled in the picturesque town of Lake City is the opulent and breathtaking hotel, The Inn at the Crossroads. The hotel, which is located midway between Columbia and Myrtle Beach, is also situated only 70 miles from another of South Carolina's most treasured antebellum destinations, Charleston.

The Inn at the Crossroads, which opened in 2014, has been instrumental in accommodating the special needs of the thousands of tourists who have travelled

to Lake City to enjoy the city's cultural events, such as the vastly popular ArtFields, a 10-day art festival created by Lake City's very own businesswoman, Darla Moore.

The hotel has a proven track record of hiring and promoting the best talent in the hospitality field, and Audril Brown, sales manager with the Inn, is a shining example of that talent. "I started as a sales coordinator/banquet captain, working and overseeing all banquet events organizing client requests from weddings, birthday celebrations, corporate meetings, etc. I stayed in this role for a year and a half until I was promoted," said Brown, who started her career with the hotel in 2015.



As the sales manager, Brown ensures that everyone is fully aware of events that will take place at the hotel. "I book all events inside/outside catering. I'm responsible for leading the hotel's sales department while managing all corporate accounts." In her position, Brown is confident in taking on various tasks throughout the day to ensure that the hotel is meeting the needs of every guest, including residents who come to the hotel to enjoy the delicious cuisine at the hotel's restaurant. "We have a full-service restaurant inside the hotel that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner. The hotel also features a bar and beautiful courtyard



for the guest and public to enjoy."

Brown said that what she loves most about her job as sales manager is the relationships she's had the opportunity to develop. "I love meeting people from all different backgrounds daily," said Brown. "I love

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making a bride happy as much as I love seeing a family arrives for a weekend family reunion. It's definitely a job I wouldn't trade," said an ecstatic Brown.

A Lake City native, Brown is the mother of a beautiful 9-year-old daughter named Ale'jah. She is a 2008 graduate of Lake City

High School, and she attended Florence-Darlington Technical College.

The Inn at Crossroads is conveniently located at 128 West Main St. The hotel has 57 smoke-free guestrooms, a restaurant and bar/lounge; fitness center; business center; 24-hour front desk; express check-out; free Wi-Fi access, and even a laundry service. Visit the website at www.theinnatthecrossroads.com or to book a reservation, call the hotel at 843-394-2100.

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INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP AS A BOTTOM-LINE BENEFICIAL GOAL



Diversity by itself is not enough. Leadership in the 21st-century demands that executives and their organizations move beyond diversity alone to capture the potential that comes from inclusion. If diversity is “the mix,” then inclusion is making

the mix work by leveraging the wealth of knowledge, insights, and perspectives in an open, trusting, and diverse workplace.

With inclusion, organizations can capture a competitive advantage from changing demographics across the workplace and in the marketplace. An organization with a reputation for inclusiveness becomes a magnet, attracting top diverse talent; in turn, that talent can better tap markets’ potential, whether in emerging economies or among a broader set of consumers at home. A diverse talent mix also can spark greater creativity and propel innovation that can help organizations distance themselves from their competition.

But inclusion is a challenge in itself. Even leaders who fully embrace the business case for diversity—understanding that homogeneous teams, although are easier to manage, are more likely to result in “group think”—often feel unprepared to be inclusive. When discussing this approach, we often hear this from clients across multiple industries: “We don’t have an understanding of what to do and how to do it differently.”

Companies in recent times have improved their recruiting and hiring of more diverse talent. There is greater diversity today—by

gender, ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation—than five or 10 years ago at the entry and supervisory levels. Overall, 50 percent of managers are women, and people of color in the United States account for one-third of the labor force. But many organizations struggle to keep that talent and advance it to positions of leadership and influence.

Research, including from mining more than 2.5 million leadership assessments, identifies the traits and competencies needed for leaders to be inclusive in their own thoughts, perceptions, and actions—and to inspire an inclusive mindset in others. Such leaders are self-aware advocates for diversity, and possess the skills to leverage the differences within the diverse team to achieve better performance than would occur with homogeneous teams. But well-managed diverse teams can significantly outperform well-managed homogenous ones over time.



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HOW TO RETAIN YOUR BEST EMPLOYEES

Millennials are making great contributions to the workplace including:

- Technological skills
- Questioning the status quo
- Market knowledge
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- A drive to make a difference



Employee turnover is a concern of many companies because it lowers company productivity and increases the workload of remaining staff. According to research, “High employee turnover hurts a company’s bottom line. Experts estimate it costs upwards of twice an employee’s salary to find and train a replacement.” With that in mind, key employee retention is critical to the long-term health and success of your business. Apropos to this, retaining key employees must be an economic imperative for most companies. If your organization is experiencing significant turnover, and you’re afraid your best employees may be leaving, we’ll show you how you can hang onto them.

1. Recognize employee contributions. Show your staff how much they are valued by sending them “thank you” comments and recognizing and flaunting their contributions company wide. When employees feel undervalued and unappreciated, they look for other employment. They need to feel that their contributions to the business are important. But the feedback and praise must be sincere.

2. Create an environment that makes your employees feel

like an asset to your company. Allow them to feel secure in their job by greeting them by name and letting them know that you know who they are.

3. Solicit feedback from employees. Get their input about rules or changes that may need to be made. Accept suggestions for problem-solving. Encouraging feedback lets them know that you are listening to their concerns and ideas.

4. Create an open and honest work environment. Giving feedback should be a two-way street so provide it on work performed and be willing to listen to the concerns of your employees. Be open and listen to new ideas. Be available and open when your employee asks for your guidance. Keep employees informed about what is happening with the company. Don’t let rumors and gossip run rampant.

5. Provide opportunities to grow and let your employees know there is room for advancement in your company. Provide tuition for continuing education classes. Tap into employees’ passion and interests and allow them to focus their time and energy on projects they enjoy. Let them know what career development plans you may have for them and what opportunities are available for them to grow with the company.

6. Share the company’s priorities, expectations and goals. When employees know what is important to the company, they make better decisions. Also, be sure you have job descriptions so your employees know what is required of them. You must communicate directly and clearly. Good employees want to please you, but they need to know what it is they need to do to make that happen.

7. Provide a competitive benefits package. Flexible schedules, telecommuting, health insurance, as well as disability and life insurances, make a difference when it comes to attracting and keeping employees.

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FLORENCE JOINS IN HOSTING TEDx EVENT

Submitted by Pete Mazzaroni, PR/Marketing Communications Consultant

TEDx EvansStreet

x = independently organized TED event

Florence joins South Carolina cities from across the state in hosting the first ever TEDxEvansStreet event on Sept. 21 at the Florence Little Theater, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the theme for the event will be “The Audacity to Dream.”

The Florence event is called TEDxEvansStreet, where x = independently organized TED event. At TEDxEvansStreet, TED Talks video and live speakers will combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. TEDxEvansStreet is an independent TEDx event operated under license issued by TED and is open to the public.

“We are excited to join Charleston, Columbia, Greenville, Hilton Head, and Myrtle Beach in hosting a TEDx event, as Florence County has quite a few thought leaders which this platform would be fitting to give them voice,” said Tonita Perry, the TEDx licensee and organizer of the event. “We hope TEDxEvansStreet will be a connector and catalyst for those who have a dream to share, resulting in action and all going back to ‘ideas worth spreading.’” The event will feature approximately 20 diverse speakers and performers with dreamy points of view, on an array of subject areas.

Perry said, “Whether conscious or unconscious, we can only hope we all dare to do it - dream. Some who dare to dream, dream to make a difference in someone else’s life or simply their own. Either way, the real revelation in making a dream a tangible reality that often encourages, motivates, and frankly, deals with real issues uninhibited is to live it. We look forward to hearing from the dreamers of Florence County.”

Speakers’ and performers’ talk may reach a vast audience on the web. In addition to being posted on TEDxEvansStreet website and YouTube channel, TED will select some TEDx talks to be released online and most are viewed by at least 100,000 people, and some by several million. Indeed, in aggregate, TED Talks have been viewed more than 100 million times worldwide. This exposure has transformed the careers of many TEDx presenters and performers, either by introducing them to larger audiences or recasting them as a thought leader.

For more information about TEDxEvansStreet, visit www.tedxevansstreet.org. Also, like on Facebook, www.facebook.com/tedxevansstreet, follow on Twitter at www.twitter.com/TEDxEvansStreet, and Instagram, at www.Instagram.com/Tedxevansstreet.

About TEDx, x = independently organized event

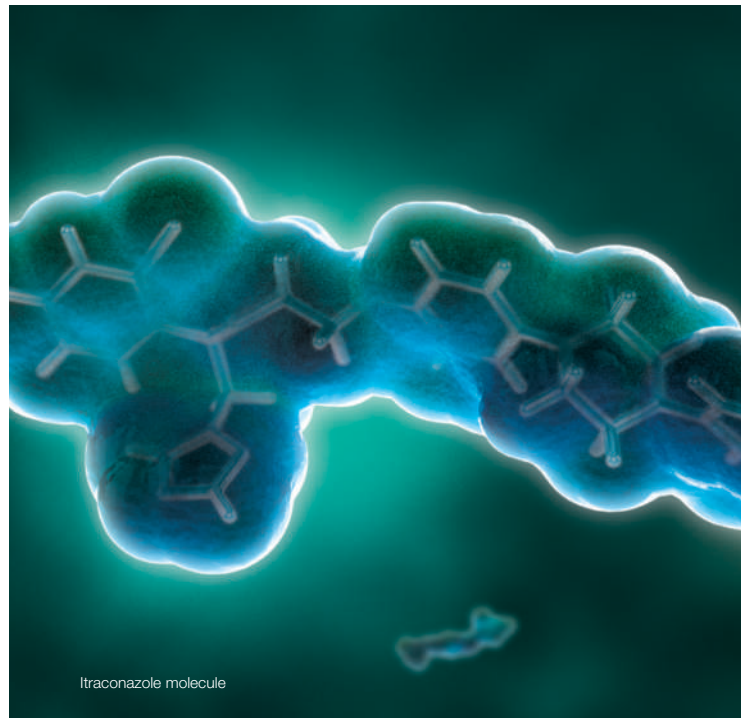
In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TED Talks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized. (Subject to certain rules and regulations.)



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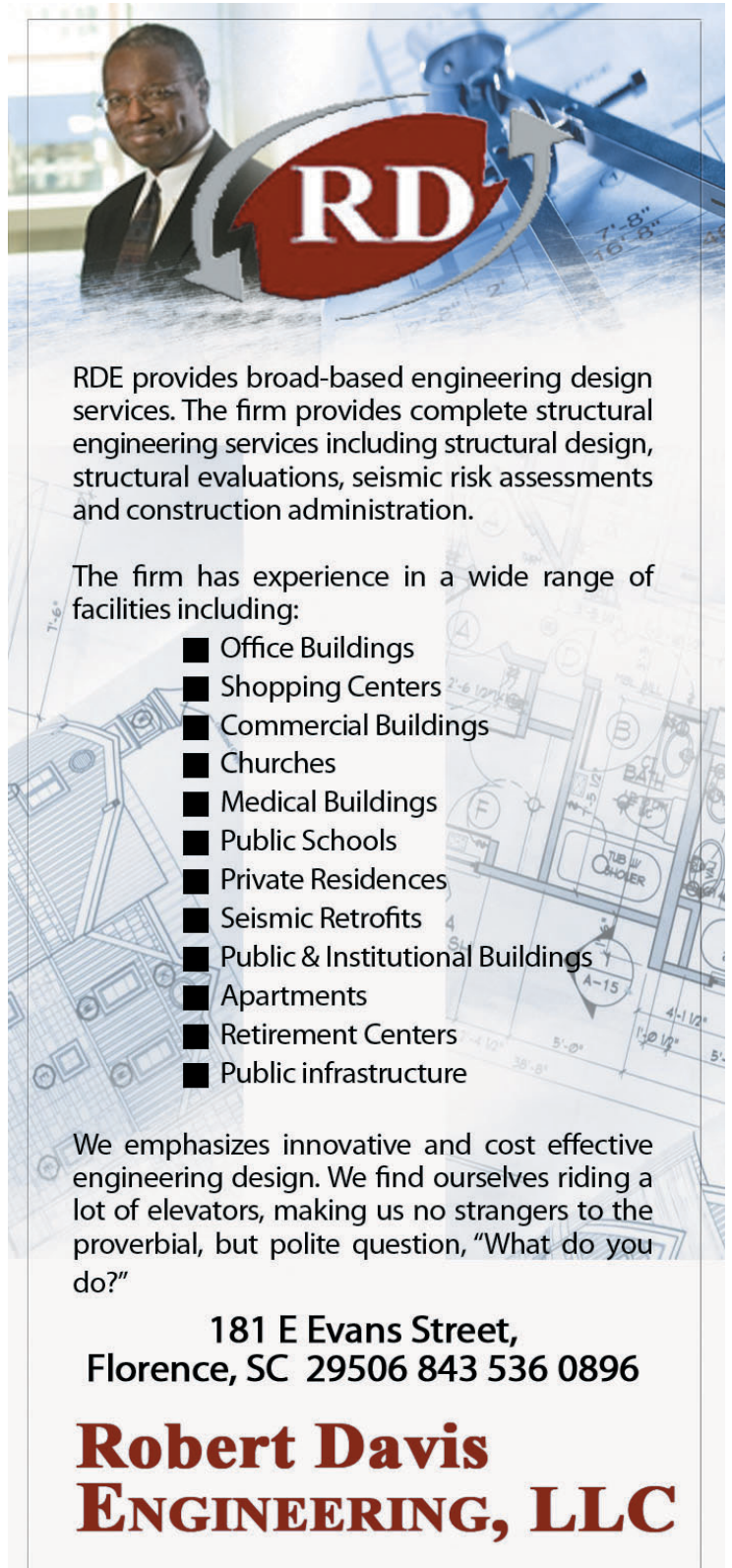
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Enhancement of Organizational
Flexibility

CALDWELL BRINGS NEW LEADERSHIP APPROACH

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Mara R. Caldwell

Johnson Controls is a global, diversified technology and multi-industrial leader serving a wide range of customers in more than 150 countries. Johnson Controls creates intelligent buildings, efficient energy solutions, integrated infrastructure and next generation transportation systems. The plant located in Florence is a distribution center for vehicle batteries. Johnson Controls distributes conventional batteries for both automakers and aftermarket customers. It sources automotive, marine, lawn and garden, and golf car batteries. Globally, Johnson Controls produces 152 million

batteries-- one-third of the industry's output -- every year.

Mara R. Caldwell serves as the plant manager for the Florence Distribution Center. She ensures a high level of employee engagement, focusing on the environmental footprint of Johnson Controls while giving back to the employees and families in the community. Caldwell has been with Johnson Controls for one year. She transferred from the Florence Poly facility to the Distribution Center in February of this year. Although she is relatively new to Johnson Controls, she possesses over 20 years of diverse operations management experience, having worked with Fortune 100 organizations stemming from General Motors, Eaton Corporation, PepsiCo, Abbott and Amazon. Caldwell has a Bachelor of Science in Business and Administration, with a minor in electrical engineering and a dual MBA in operations management and manufacturing management.

As plant manager, Caldwell and the dedicated staff will be focused on the Johnson Controls Manufacturing System journey to help drive the company to be operationally excellent over the course of the next year. As part of this journey Johnson Controls will be updating equipment within the facility to

increase the ability to deliver exceptional customer experiences and solutions; will continue to strengthen quality performance through the evolution of systems, standards, and tools; and will be using High Performance Teams to empower the people to improve the workplace.

When asked what makes her an ideal leader Caldwell humbly states, "As a leader I have been most successful by employing a servant leadership type of approach, along with a humble and transparent leadership style. It is about the desire to help others by identifying and meeting the needs of colleagues, customers, and the community. Focus on serving employees for their own good and not just for the good of the organization, and form long-term relationships. Most importantly, as a leader I encourage employees' growth and development so that they may reach their fullest potential while being concerned with the success of all stakeholders' - employees, customers, and communities."

When it comes to diversity in the workplace, Caldwell says, "It takes a strong and compassionate individual to lead people. For women specifically, you have to be able to utilize your emotional maturity in a productive way and use it as a key differentiator. I've worked in environments where only 1 percentage women. You may feel like you don't belong, but you do," stated Caldwell. "As a woman in a leadership position you can utilize compassion and care and bring that to the table to make a difference within the environment. It's the diversity of thought that is most important and how you utilize this for the success of the team, the individual and yourself."

Mara Caldwell is a happily married mother of three beautiful children. She enjoys deep-sea fishing, camping and boat riding, mostly just being outdoors. Caldwell supports a charitable organization that helps children who are suffering from hair loss, which may be caused by cancer, alopecia or any serious illness. She lives each day with the purpose to continuously grow and positively impact the lives of others, both professionally and personally.



A Deep Commitment to Diversity.

At Johnson Controls, diversity is a necessity for doing business the right way. We provide customers with products and services reflecting the preferences of a diverse global marketplace—and this requires a workforce with the thoughts, ideas and experiences needed to serve all markets.

This focus on diversity providing a competitive advantage has led to measurable results. Female representation overall and at the officer and board exceeds U.S. manufacturing benchmarks. The number of minority executives at Johnson Controls continues to grow and the number of our minority employees in the United States mirrors the population.

We nurture an environment in which everyone understands and values the similarities and differences among our employees, customers and communities.

For more information, please visit www.johnsoncontrols.com.



GIDDIED UP AND GAVE

Submitted by Rachel Baggett Director of Marketing and Initiatives United Way of Florence



UWFC Board Chair, Quincy Kennedy presents the Campaign Chair Recognition Award to UWFC Campaign Chair, John Cariati.

Donors were taken back to the days of the Wild West at the United Way of Florence County's Annual Luncheon and Awards Celebration on April 27. The activity hall at First Presbyterian Church was decorated with wagon wheels, cacti, cowboy hats and other Western items to celebrate the culmination of the 2016-2017 "Giddy Up and Give" campaign. Along with celebrating the end of the campaign, the event also recognized the close to 50 companies and individuals who had donated their time, efforts and money to the United Way and the 2016-2017 campaign.

"As a campaign coordinator myself, I know firsthand how much work and effort goes into pulling off a successful United Way campaign," said John Cariati, quality operations manager for Assurant and the 2016-2017 UWFC Campaign Chair. "Although it may be a tough ride, know that on behalf of the United Way, our seventeen partner agencies, and the thousands of individuals who are helped each year, we truly appreciate each and every dollar the coordinators round up."

Top Giver Awards

These awards honor the companies with the highest total giving, combining corporate and

employee support, in each Campaign Excellence level:

Overall Recipient: PGBA, LLC, \$194,633

Gold Level Recipient: HONDA of South Carolina, \$52,907

Silver Level Recipient: GE Healthcare, \$36,299

Bronze Level Recipient: First Reliance Bank, \$8,943

Partner Agency Award

This award recognizes the UWFC partner agency that has demonstrated commitment to the cooperative relationship between United Way and its agencies by providing projects for Day of Caring, running a campaign, sending staff to trainings and participating in company presentations:

Recipient: Florence County Disabilities & Special Needs Board

Campaign Advancement Award

This award honors the company with the greatest percentage increase in giving from last year's campaign.

Recipient: Otis Elevator (61 percent increase)

Campaign All-Around Award

This award honors a company that skillfully administers its campaign, making sure to include every necessary component as recommended by United Way Staff.



Otis Elevator accepts the Campaign Advancement Award from UWFC Campaign Chair, John Cariati.

Recipient: Johnson Controls Distribution Center

Spirit Award

This award is typically given to a company that encourages giving through a festive fundraising environment, but this year, the award was presented to performer Dandy Don who wrote a song based on the "Giddy Up and Give" tagline. Dandy Don was also present at the United Way Annual Luncheon to perform the song live.

Recipient: Dandy Don

Ashpy P. Lowrimore Award

This award is presented annually to an individual or individuals that model Lowrimore's legacy of humanity and generosity through financial and public support of the Florence County Community.

Recipients: Roger Hux and Julia Krebs

Campaign Excellence Awards

These awards are presented to companies in recognition of their total employee and corporate giving of \$5,000 or more during the campaign. The United Way wishes it could highlight every company and individual that supports the campaign, but we do want to express our deep gratitude to everyone who



Roger Hux and Julia Krebs accept the 2016 Ashpy P. Lowrimore Award from 2013 recipient, John Hanna.

supported the campaign this year. Thirty companies were presented with Campaign Excellence Awards honoring their corporate and employee giving at Bronze (\$5,000-\$9,999), Silver (\$10,000-\$39,999), Gold (\$40,000-\$69,999), and Platinum (\$70,000+) levels. A full list of Campaign Excellence Award winners can be found at www.uwflorence.org.

The Future

Although the 2016-2017 campaign year just concluded at the end of June, the United Way staff has already started to prepare for 2017-2018 campaign year with a brand new theme. The theme will be announced at the 2017 Day of Caring event in September, which officially kicks off the new campaign year for the United Way. To learn more about the United Way and how your donation can impact the community, go online to www.uwflorence.org or www.facebook.com/UWFlorence.

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JONES CUSTOMIZES TRAINING ON CULTURE CHANGE AT HONDA OF SC

by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Dr. Steven Jones is the CEO of JONES, a consulting firm that recently conducted Inclusive Leadership training at Honda of South Carolina Mfg., Inc. (HSC). In the late '90s he started doing diversity and inclusion (D&I) leadership training at San Diego State for student leaders then expanded to facilitate training seminars with local student leaders across the country. Jones' firm then grew to training city government leaders and steadily flourished to now working with corporations including Honda North America, Toyota, Harvard University and CBS Television Network, to name a few.

"The mission of JONES is truly the key driver of the firm. The mission is to develop leaders and organizational systems that counter oppression through diversity, inclusion and organizational excellence. So our focus is saying, how do we train leaders with the skills to lead in a way that brings the best out of people while managing their responses to similarities, and differences and minimizing the impact of bias in the workplace?" According to Jones, this is all a key part of how JONES came about.

JONES uses a very broad definition of diversity: "the diversity of thought, diversity of background, diversity of talent, and diversity of people." The CEO of the company added, "We tell leaders, '90 percent of who I am, you can't see. Yet, we make 90 percent of our judgments based on the 10 percent that we do see.'"

Jones pointed out that some of the national best practices for driving D&I for increased employee engagement and higher performance throughout organizations are as follows:

1. There must be leadership commitment: Executives must be engaged. (Jones concluded that at Honda, they are.)
2. Companies must have a D&I strategy: It's not about simply putting associates through training, but companies must have culture change strategies to drive an inclusive work environment that leverages diversity of thought to achieve business goals.
3. Business resource groups are important to companies: They provide a great resource for retention of diverse employees and allow companies to tap into diversity of thought, talent, and people to solve business problems.
4. Companies must have leaders who are trained with inclusive leadership skills to create an inclusive higher performing environment.
5. Metrics are needed to measure the effectiveness of D&I strategies as well as to monitor the positive impact on the work environment.

JONES has clients all over the country but was doing training at Honda Manufacturing in Ohio when they received a call from Lucinda Fountain, who wanted to have them come out and do the training in South Carolina. 2017 marked Jones' third year working with Honda on customized diversity and inclusion initiatives.

One of the core values of JONES and the way they operate as a company is "we lead with listening. It's the key part of why many of our clients feel the training we provide is very effective," said Jones. "What differentiates JONES from other consulting firms is that we bring the best of organizational psychology and merge that with the best of what we know about diversity and inclusion to create higher-performing organizations. We merge those two to create what we call 'culturally-competent organizational development.'"

"Before conducting the training with Honda, JONES did focus groups with the associates to understand their experiences at HSC. The goal was to find out what caused them to feel valued and which areas of the culture

needed improvement. JONES then incorporated the lessons from the focus groups it into the inclusive leadership training. Honda wanted leaders to better understand the topics of generational differences and unconscious bias. Therefore, the company committed to doing training from the president to frontline team leaders and associates building side-by-side ATVs. HSC also intends to train associates working on the line so they get those skills too." To Jones, Honda offering training of this magnitude "is great example



of the commitment leaders have to the company, the culture and the employees."

"We started out the training at HSC by focusing on culture change, which is a tool to increase the level of

engagement and inclusion. To have a high performing inclusive environment, a company must have commitment from the top of the organization and throughout all other levels. Therefore, this workshop began with the president and all of his direct reports on the operating committee. Gary Mabrey, HSC's current president, and the company's previous president, Brian Newman, both have that necessary commitment. Then we trained the leadership in the area of cultural competency, which are the skills that allow leaders to really motivate people who are similar to them and people who are different from them. When employees feel valued and respected, their performance goes up, but when they do not feel valued and respected, morale goes down and then performance follows close behind."

Jones said he tells company leaders: "People will care about how much you know once they know about how much you care. We focus on both D&I because you can have diversity and not have an inclusive work environment where people feel comfortable bringing up their diverse ideas. You can also have inclusion and not have diversity where people are more similar and feel comfortable but don't have the diversity of thought."

The JONES team conducts both pre- and post- surveys for each workshop it does. The team is still finalizing the results for HSC feedback from the training, but so far the results communicated have been very positive. Jones said, "We have been finding that there had been an increase in leadership skills of HSC leaders, an increase in leaders' ability to communicate based on Honda's philosophy of respect for the individual, an increase in engagement of management and team leaders, and leaders have developed skills to motivate employees to do their best."

Hannah Howle, a HSC document control representative who attended the training, received helpful feedback from the workshop and recommends it to other companies. Howle stated that she learned about generational gaps and the importance of "telling and listening to each other about our upbringing, which instilled our morals and work ethics."

"Studies have shown that organizations with higher levels of diversity experience higher levels of success," stated Raphael Parks, HSC associate in product engineering department (PED) Strength Test Group, another workshop attendee. He added, "According to Dr. Jones, 'Diverse people contribute their best in an inclusive environment.'"

According to Parks, workshop participants were given the opportunity to discover unconscious biases within themselves and learn about the impact they have on others. By attending the training, Parks learned that "unconscious bias can be managed by reverse engineering your thought process and through simply thinking of the impact of your words and actions before your intentions." Overall, he learned to "always remember the Platinum Rule: Treat others as THEY want to be treated because they may not like what you like." Parks highly recommends the JONES training workshop to other corporations.

REVITALIZING CORE NEIGHBORHOODS IN FLORENCE TO CREATE A VIBRANT COMMUNITY

Submitted by Amanda Pope, CMO Administrator



At the beginning of 2017, Neighborhood Redevelopment was described in Diversity Works as a city project that would impact the community as a whole and would improve our quality of life in the Florence area. City Council, city staff, project consultants, and APD Urban Planning & Management

are working diligently to bring years of planning to a reality.

Why is the City leading the revitalization effort and taking an interest in improving housing stock in our core neighborhoods within the city limits of Florence? Neighborhood decline and disinvestment in East, North, and Northwest Florence neighborhoods occurred slowly over several decades, with little to no investment by the private sector. The City is taking action to jump-start revitalization, creating opportunities for private investment in these neighborhoods. Vitality in all our Florence neighborhoods is essential to ensure economic growth for the community. A strong economy in Florence benefits everyone, bringing better employment opportunities and improving quality of life, making our community a great place to live, play and work.

Over the past three years, the City of Florence has developed a master plan and development guidelines for target neighborhoods, drafted a financial incentives program for builders and home buyers, completed preparation of new house plans, and developed a marketing strategy to promote the overall effort. During this time, the City has also acquired and assembled land in priority development areas. The City's approach was to purchase property that is abandoned or vacated by the property owner. This process, which includes third-party appraisals to ensure fair market value, requires attention and patience. Prior to the acquisition process, the City worked with property owners and encouraged them to reinvest and keep their property, if it was feasible.

On Mar. 27 a ground-breaking ceremony was held for the first of the City's catalytic projects, Vista Place Development. Construction began shortly thereafter in April. There are currently three homes under construction and a fourth planned in the development located in North Florence at the intersection of Vista and North Irby Streets adjacent to North Vista Elementary School. Vista Place features architecturally significant, affordable homes, which accentuate the existing character of the community. On an interim basis, the City utilized a procurement process to select builders, developers, contractors, engineers, architects and others to work on priority projects within these revitalization areas.



Along with improving the new housing opportunities in these neighborhoods, infrastructure improvements are also occurring in target neighborhoods and many other areas throughout the city. These infrastructure improvements

include street resurfacing and new sidewalk installation and are made possible through the one-cent capital sales tax monies that were approved several years ago by our community.

Are you interested in purchasing a new construction home in Vista Place Development or any future development in our target neighborhood areas? If so, contact our Community Services Department at 843-665-3175 to inquire. For additional information about Vista Place Development or the Neighborhood Revitalization program, visit our dedicated website, <http://florenceneighborhoods.com/>. To learn more about the City's Community Services Department and Housing program, visit the City of Florence website @ <http://www.cityofflorence.com/departments/general-services/housing.aspx>.

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MANAGING LIKE AN EXECUTIVE



If you are a business owner, regardless of the size of your organization, you are challenged with keeping every area of your business going. You cannot afford to let things slip or go undone. Time is money. There is no time to be ineffective.

There are many courses on how to start a business, the different functions of the business, and all the many things you need to do to be effective. We are going to share a few examples as to why you need such a system and some strategies that makes a great planner.

1. Easily accessible

Successful companies go through strategic planning to chart a path to achieving the vision. But how do you keep that in the forefront as you plan your week? Out of sight, out of mind. We have so many people and things that try to pull us in the direction of their interest. Having a way to keep your vision in front of you no matter where you go will help you be successful. It should also be easy to use... a tool that can go with you, be flexible, and fit in anywhere.

2. Intentionally achieve your goals

We all set goals. If not, we really need to talk. Goals are dreams until we actually do the work. Your planner should ensure you do the work every week. To reach your goals, you have to break them down to achievable tasks that you accomplish step by step. The planner should be an encourager by letting you see how far you have come.

3. Keep track of all areas of your business

Most planners help you manage your time, keep notes, and jot

down to-dos. That's good. However, when you are a business owner you are juggling your operations, finance, business development, products/services, and any other administrative tasks. Whether you are doing it all yourself or have a team, you need to have a high level view of what's going on. Out of sight, out of mind. You need to also know who you delegated things to. Remember you are the CEO and ultimately responsible for it all.

4. Help you keep important tasks top of mind.

There are key action items we need to get done. However, we get caught in the weeds. Well, I call these "must-dos" mountains. They may not be your favorite things to do, but they are important to your progress. No matter how busy you get, a planner should be able to quickly get you back on course.

Another important task a planner should be able to help you focus on is sowing seeds. Successful people help... sow into others. If you have a team, to be an effective leader you should invest in your people. People management is a challenge for managers but when done correctly can get you the followers you need to achieve. If you don't have team members, you can invest in someone else or volunteer. Giving back is a great leadership principle.

Boundaries Results Calendar time
Value Control setting Plan Time best office
analysis Wins
Management
skill Action Best Goals planning
projects activity action Mindset
practices perform
Practices
process Goal balance Habits Success
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GILLISPIE OFFERS EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE TO MARION AND DILLON COUNTIES

Submitted by Marcia Gillispie, Job Coach



Marcia Gillispie

The Marion-Dillon County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs is a provider agency of the South Carolina Department of Disabilities & Special Needs. SCDDSN believes that most people who want a job should be able to have one regardless of his or her disability and can work if provided the necessary and appropriate support. With this principle in mind, Marcia Gillispie, a native of Fairmont, N.C., has been employed since Oct. 2016 by MCDBDSN as a job coach to serve the individuals in Dillon County who are currently

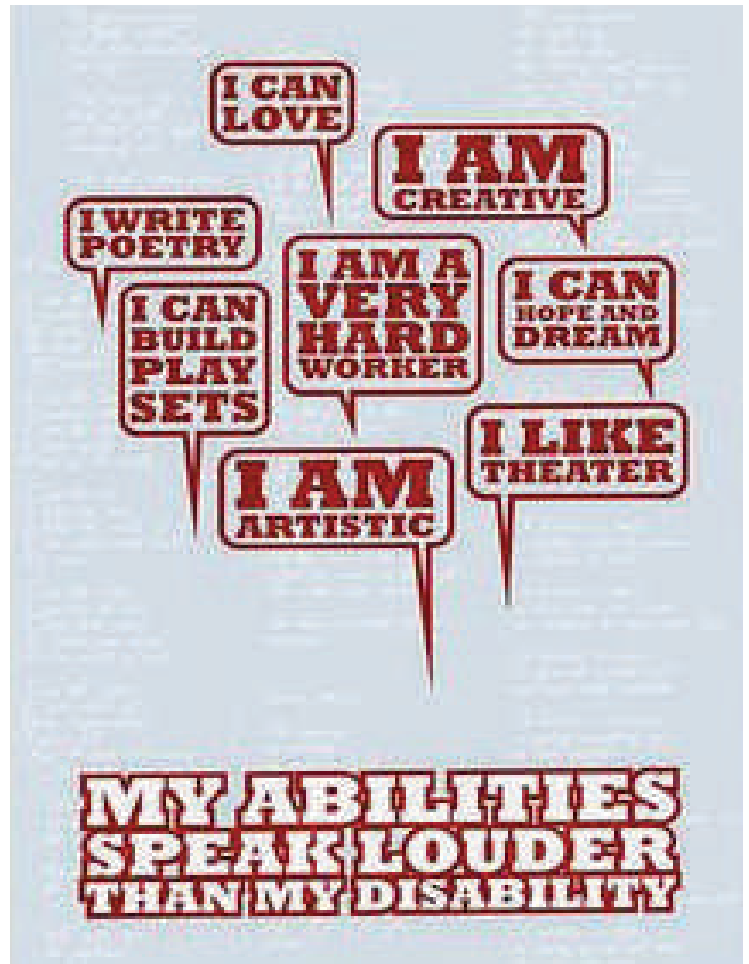
enrolled in its program. Gillispie has completed several trainings provided by SCDDSN such as Employment First – Pulling it All Together; Employment 101-Developing Supporting Employment Opportunities; Employment 101 – Supporting Individuals with Disabilities; and Creating Economic Opportunity in Rural & Remote Areas. Gillispie is also a member of the transition team for the Dillon County School District IV for the Transition Alliance of South Carolina.

Gillispie provides skills and support for people with intellectual disabilities who desire to work but for whom competitive employment is currently not

Marion-Dillon County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs

achievable. MCDBDSN embraces the principles of “Employment First and Branching out to Become Independent,” and this is the goal that Gillispie wants to achieve for the people that they are currently serving at MCDBDSN.

Marcia Gillispie can be contacted at 843-774-6775 ext. 165.



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CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE CAN BE COSTLY TO COMPANIES IF IGNORED

Submitted by Joyce Hill, Founder of KPI Fusion



Joyce Hill

I was facilitating a leadership workshop with a local company last week, and I asked how many felt comfortable dealing with conflict. No one raised their hand. I then asked, "How many have conflict in their area?" Almost everyone raised his or her hand. Conflict is inevitable in the workplace today because we bring to work our different personalities, different values, different interests and different ethnic backgrounds.

Feeling uncomfortable with conflict is natural,

but avoiding it when you are the leaders and supervisors of the companies can be costly. Leadership and conflict go hand in hand, and if you do not or will not address conflict in a healthy, productive fashion, you will lose credibility. If left unresolved, it can manifest itself into low engagement of your employees, high absenteeism, poor productivity and high turnover. Recently, I read a study conducted by the CPP company (publishers of the Myer-Briggs Assessment), and they found that in 2008 U.S. employees spent 2.8 hours per week dealing with conflict. This amounts to over \$300 billion in paid hours based on average hour earnings. That is an awful lot of time spent not working and decreasing productivity within the companies.

So, what are a company and the leaders to do to help prevent and resolve conflict? First, realize that conflict is normal and healthy in companies. Healthy conflict where employees feel they are encouraged to challenge ideas drives innovation and progress. Listed below are eight ways to prevent and correct unhealthy conflict in the workplace.

1. Recognize and embrace different personalities - Personality differences are sometimes the root cause in conflict situations. People process information and make decisions differently. Knowing how your employees approach work provides invaluable understanding, allowing you to draw on their strengths rather than discredit their work styles or habits. Having members of management trained on what their personality style (Myers Briggs or DiSC) is and how it impacts their relationships can be the first step in preventing conflict. The more we understand about ourselves and others, the more effective we can be when dealing with differences.

2. Offer feedback timely - Conflict arises when employees feel their co-workers are getting away with not performing and when other are not being recognized for their accomplishments. Ensure you use F.A.S.T. (Frequent, Accurate, Specific and Timely) to balance corrective and positive performances.

3. Strive for Win-Win Resolution - We start at an early age learning in competitive sports that someone needs to WIN and someone needs to LOSE. This continues throughout our life and especially at work. Embrace the conflict and strive for the WIN-WIN solution. Do your homework when there is a conflict and try to understand both sides. One of the best trainings I have taken over the years was Crucial Conversations (Vital Smarts). It is a process to use in which all parties feel they win, and it stops conflict when both parties feel they didn't lose.

4. Ensure your policies are consistent - Employers should ensure they are consistent when applying the company's policies and procedures and not show bias in their approach to managing inappropriate behavior in their workforce. When there is an inconsistency and employees perceive there is favoritism shown for some reason, it has a spiraling effect on the morale and creates more inappropriate behavior.

5. Communicate effectively - So many conflicts arise when there is a lack of information, poor information, no information, inappropriate



delivery or misinformation. Practice the 7 C's of Communication, which states that communication should be courteous, clear, concise, concrete, correct, coherent and complete.

6. Develop your Management - Having good conflict resolution skills is important, but this alone will not prevent or correct conflict in the workplace. So often, supervisors get promoted because they are good at their job, not because of their excellent leadership skills. Having a required set of training for all new supervisors will help to ensure they get all the skills like communication, trust building, team building, performance management, and accountability. These tools help them to be more effective as a leader.

7. Create an environment where new ideas are encouraged - Employees want to feel they add value to the company, and that means supporting their ideas and implementing them when they are good. Companies prosper when there is a sharing of opinions and ideas. Listen to your employees and take action.

8. Develop Trust by not gossiping - For many, gossip in the workplace is a frequent guilty pleasure. Having someone go to his or her management tell them something personal, and later find out that others know it too, is dangerous. This is one important action all employees should follow. Don't get caught up in the gossip environment. We have all been through sessions where you tell someone something, and by the time it gets to the end, it is entirely false.

I have seen so many conflicts in my various jobs, and the ones where the company leaders took charge in ensuring resolution were the most effective in stopping the conflicts. This was done by gaining a Win-Win solution. They gained trust from the people involved and having trust is the cornerstone of an effective leader. A small controllable conflict left unresolved can fester into a large uncontrollable conflict and result in losing valuable employees and increasing more costs for the company.

**HOW TO CONFRONT
CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE**
**WORKPLACE CONFLICT
BEST PRACTICES:**
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DUKE ENERGY CEO TO HIGHLIGHT WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

Articles Submitted by Quinetta M. Buterbaugh, President



Lynn Good

HARTSVILLE – On Sept. 8, the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce will host its first-ever Women's Leadership Symposium, presented by Sonoco. The symposium, held at the Harris E. and Louise H. DeLoach Center in Hartsville, will be from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and will feature breakout sessions, a panel discussion, award presentations and lunch.

Themed "Marketing and Branding Yourself for Success," the event will feature professional women who have

paved the way for the professional development of others. A panel discussion will be moderated by Sonoco's Vice President of Global Quality and Hartsville Chamber Board Member Leslie Pemberton. Pemberton will lead the discussion "The Journey to Leadership" with Sonoco's highest-ranking female executive, Senior Vice President Vicki Arthur; first female CEO of SPC Credit Union Linda Weatherford; and the to-be-named 2017 Woman of Achievement Lynn Good, CEO of Duke Energy. Good will deliver the keynote address during lunch.

"The Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce is providing this resource to all who seek to grow professionally in this fast-paced, ever-changing society. We invite you to be a part of it," said Symposium Chair Rebecca Ward.

"The chamber wants to provide an opportunity for women in the workforce of all levels to interact with one another, learn from the

experiences of some of the best in the business, and have the opportunity for a full day of professional development, right here in Hartsville," said Hartsville Chamber President Quinetta Buterbaugh. "Our goal is to make the symposium an annual event, delivering relevant content and growth opportunities to women."

Breakout sessions will highlight topics on maneuvering generational diversity for self-branding, the influence of board participation, use of social media for brand enhancement and social media etiquette. Medical University of South Carolina Media Relations Director Heather Woolwine, Senior Human Resources Consultant of Find Great People Carrie Cavanaugh, and former Administrator of the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs Brandolyn Thomas-Pinkston will deliver inspiring messages during the breakout sessions.

For more information or to purchase tickets for the Women's Leadership Symposium, visit www.hartsvillechamber.org, or call the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce at 843-332-6401.

The Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce is a membership-based business advocacy organization founded in 1910. The Chamber provides a voice for local businesses, supports economic development, and promotes the vibrant and personal community that makes Hartsville appealing to businesses and residents.



HARTSVILLE'S FUTURE LEADERS COMPLETE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Chamber honors Leadership Hartsville Class of 2017

HARTSVILLE –The 2017 Leadership Hartsville class graduated in a closed ceremony in May at the Butler Heritage Auditorium. The 9-month leadership development program, made available through the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce, has provided participants with growth and networking opportunities since the class kicked off in September of 2016.

The 15 honored during graduation were Caroline Adams, Agape Hospice; Cassie Brock, Coker College; Krista Burian, Richard Drehs and Nelson Tart, Duke Energy; Rebecca Edwards, Sherry Griggs and Karine Thomas, City of Hartsville; Laura Fimibama, North Industrial Machine; Thomas Kennedy, Moore Beauston Woodham; Landon Kirby, Pepsi Cola of Florence; Dawn Seals, Hospice Care of South Carolina; Hannah Stanley, Hampton Inn & Suites; Denise Tedder, Heritage Community Bank; and Dr. Kenzo Tochiki, Hartsville Animal Hospital. "This year's class was an exceptional group of leaders; they have the potential to make a lasting, positive mark on our great city. It has been interesting watching them grow as a team throughout the program," commented chamber president Quinetta Buterbaugh.

Each year, the class selects a service project to contribute positively to life in Hartsville. Previous class projects have included the Tales on

the Town downtown scavenger hunt, the park-style benches downtown, an information kiosk and a youth mentoring program. The 2017 class has elected to erect "Fox Den" miniature libraries. Partnering with a local Boy Scout working on his Eagle Scout recognition, the class will be placing the libraries in the city's parks. Employers of the classmates and the business community are currently funding the project.

The 2017 participants enjoyed learning about Hartsville's many business, social and civic opportunities, as well as about its rich cultural history. Site visits included the Robinson Nuclear Plant, Kalmia Gardens at Coker College, Butler Heritage Center and many others.

Program participants also wrote a monthly column about their experiences that appeared in the Hartsville Messenger. The articles reviewed the day, and the writers shared their own personal experiences and observations. Participant Hannah Stanley wrote in her article for January, "Our class has had a wonderful time thus far immersing ourselves into Hartsville, learning about opportunities to invest in our communities and be contributing members where we live. We are ... grateful to the many community leaders that have taken time from their days to invest in us. We look forward to using our own abilities, resources, and talents to help make Hartsville an even better place to live and raise a family."

The chamber will begin accepting applications for the 2018 Leadership Hartsville class this coming fall. Employees of all chamber member businesses are welcome to apply. To learn more about the Leadership Hartsville program, contact the chamber at 843-332-6401.

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HOW TO BUILD THE RIGHT SELF IMAGE

by Robin Lewis



HEMINGWAY - The world is always telling us how to improve ourselves, be more attractive, more valuable, or more successful. According to the world, we never accomplish enough, travel enough, work

enough, make enough, sleep enough, give enough, all with the bottom line that who we are is never enough. This voice is always pointing out our faults so that we'll buy their shampoo, attend their school, and then when things don't turn out like they promised, we turn to the latest antidepressant medication.

Our problem is that we listen. We listen because we're afraid it's true: we just aren't enough the way we are. We judge ourselves against every new definition that tells us how we should think, live, raise our children, and invest our money. We're afraid of a lack of acceptance, approval or success if we don't comply with the latest "norm." What we're really in hopes of finding is a voice that says we're okay the way we are.



How do you describe yourself?

Is it by what you do in your work, hobbies or activities? Is it by your title or position? Do you introduce yourself by sharing your labors or accomplishments? Or... is your introduction and self-image more in line with what makes you unique from everyone else?

How do you feel about yourself?

When you think of your life, your relationships, your family, are the thoughts that rise critical, judgmental or depressing? Do you compare your accomplishments to what others have done?

What do you say when you talk to yourself?

Is your self-talk critical and condemning or encouraging and affirming? If it's more critical, has there also been a pattern of criticism from others in your life? Our words create. Our words have power whether they exist in our thoughts, our emotions, or our speech. The way you describe yourself, how you feel about yourself and what you say to yourself is important. Proverbs 23:7 says, "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." The way you view your life and what you believe is possible for you greatly influences your choices, decisions and future.

We have a choice.

We can take on the identity the world gives, or seek God to know who He has made us to be. We can learn to see ourselves as uniquely created individuals with different strengths, abilities and purpose. God's view of us is not connected to our problems, performance or past. He sees us as beloved children, regardless of race, gender or social status, and he loves us uniquely without comparing us to another. He doesn't look at Susan and wish she were more like Kathy. He loves Susan for who she is and Kathy for what makes her unique.

We can learn to love ourselves.

Jesus said the greatest commandments are these: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Mark 12:30-31). This first begins with seeking and loving God. When we do, only then do we love ourselves and others the way He intended. We can't have a negative attitude if we want to build a

positive, healthy self-image. We each have been created with enormous potential that largely goes unpacked. We must embrace the truth of who we are and develop our strengths.

We can change our current mindset.

When faced with changing the way we believe and think, many resist changes. When we resist change, we are resisting maturity. There's hope available, but we must embrace what is true and the change needed that leads to the positive, truthful self-image we want. We come equipped with renewable minds, so when we believe what God says is true about us, we realize that we don't have to prove anything to anyone. We can make choices and decisions from a mindset of confidence because we know that our identity is secure in Him. We can live our lives differently from others because we are walking in who we are instead of conforming to be like everyone else.

We can build the right self-image.

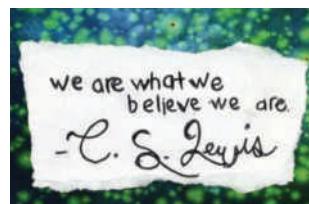
When we think of embracing a truthful self-image, we are really talking about seeing ourselves through God's eyes and embracing who we are – which is like no one else. If we believe we are created to be different from anyone else, then what others think or say about us won't have a damaging impact on us emotionally. This is where our souls are less troubled and more content. The right self-image is confident, courageous, and kind. It neither elevates itself over others, nor does it demean itself. It leads, considering every team member. It brings a positive influence that builds others up. The right self-image has an identity that begins and ends in what God says is true.

For lasting change, practice truth.

To change the way we think about ourselves, we need to discover where we compare ourselves, where we put ourselves down, and where we are seeking acceptance. Then we "practice the truth" we need to believe. The list below is a way to begin. Repeat these truths about yourself daily for 30 days and renew your mind with what God says is true about you:



- God chose everything about me – my personality, eye color, and family. He cares deeply about me.
- I am unique, one-of-a-kind. There is nobody else like me. I am learning to love who I am.
- I can develop the gifts and strengths that make me a unique treasure and blessing. I am the best and only me there is.
- My world needs me. I bring something to my family and workplace that no other person has. I don't have to change my originality for the sake of others.
- While I don't know everything about who I am going to be or all that I will do, I believe I am loved, I am a blessing, and I am a life-giver to the world.



Remember, we were not created to reflect the image of the world, but to reflect God's love uniquely. You can rebuild your self-image for more confidence, courage and a fulfilling life. Stop hoping for change, and make it happen. For more on renewing the mind, contact Robin Lewis at www.robinlewislife.com and request a free set of her "Truth for Life Cards" designed to help renew your self-image and right identity. Source: Blessing Your Spirit by Sylvia Gunter, © 2005 The Father's Business

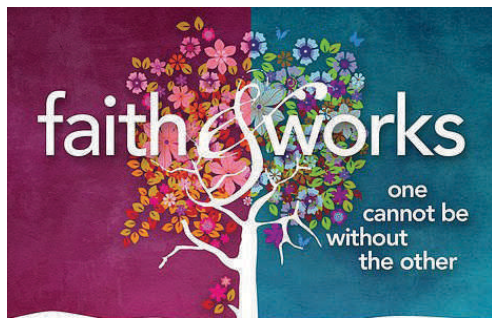
“LOCAL GUY” ANSWERS CALL TO DIVINITY

by Les Echols



Reverend J. Derrick Cattenhead

When Reverend J. Derrick Cattenhead was appointed to join Central United Methodist church in Florence as an associate pastor, he saw it as the beginning of a divine and unique journey. A self-professed “local guy” from Lake City, Cattenhead is no stranger to the Florence area, having attended Wilson High School for a brief period. Three years ago, when Cattenhead was asked if he was open to a cross-racial appointment in Florence, he was open to the opportunity but wasn’t sure how the actual logistics would play out. Then, a little over a year ago, when he was asked if he was still open to the opportunity,



James 2:15-18

Cattenhead was adamant that he never wavered, but instead looked to prayer and meditation for answers. “Although I knew this was a great opportunity, I wanted it to be the right opportunity.” Cattenhead along with his and his wife and

children prayed extensively on the situation. “I am at a stage in my life where I am comfortable with who I am, and I wanted to make sure this position was a genuine calling,” said Cattenhead.

Cattenhead has an extensive list of day-to-day duties that are broken down into three major areas of focus. The first focus area is managing program staff, which includes family life programs, as well as adult and children’s ministry programs. Cattenhead oversees program directors who are directly responsible for each program, including Feeding Florence and C-Unity Racial Cross-the-Road Ministry, the latter of which is done

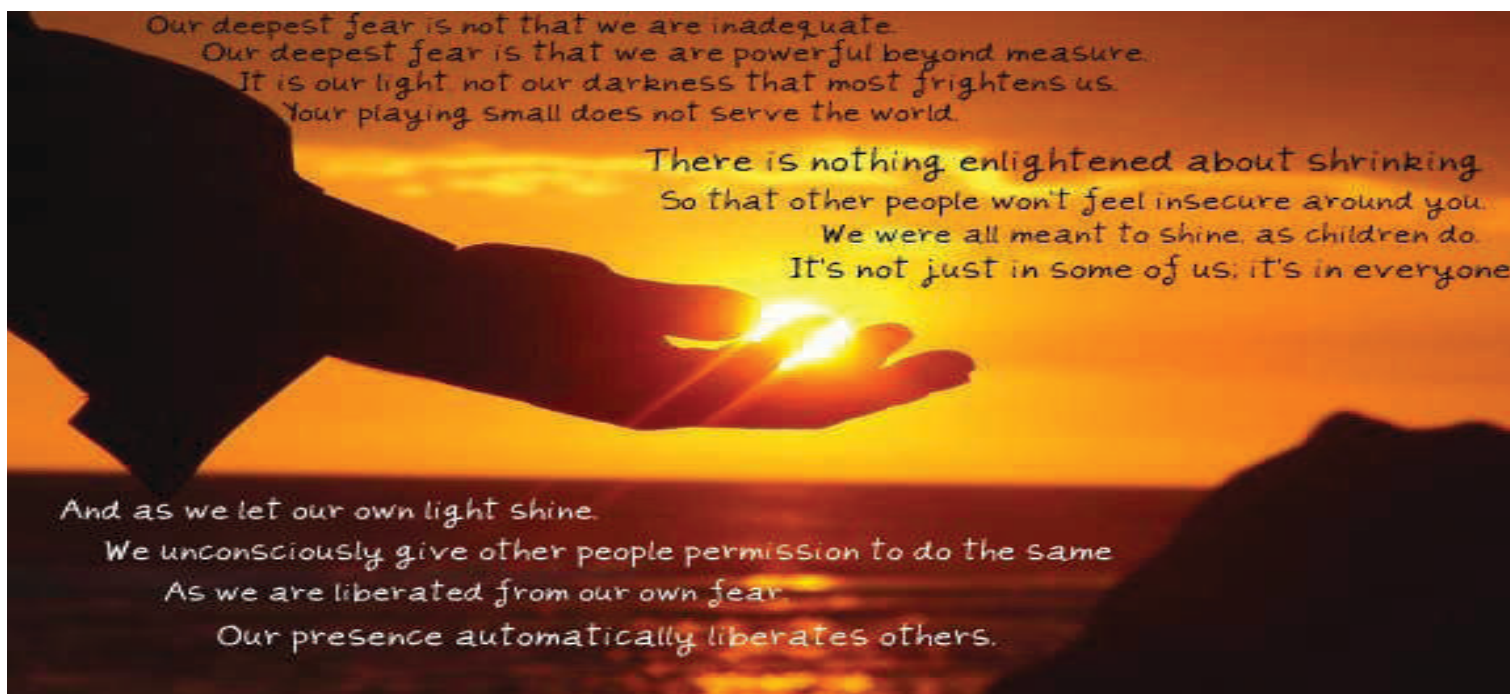


in fellowship with Cumberland United Methodist church, also in Florence. Cattenhead is also responsible for outreach, which is a major aspect of the ministry since a significant amount of church resources go back out into the community to support outreach efforts. His third area of focus at Central is evangelism, which he spoke at length about. “We are working on ramping up our evangelism and discipleship programs, which are at the heart of what we do. We must be compelled to go out and get people to come in. And for that to happen, I must make sure all the programs and systems are running effectively and efficiently,” continued Cattenhead.

We asked about the dynamic of diversity at Central, and Cattenhead gave a big-picture idea of the direction they are moving toward. While Cattenhead admits that making Central more diverse is a work in progress, he also acknowledges that they are seeing growth in diversity of all races. “When I first came to visit, I didn’t want to just help create an agenda centered around diversity in and of itself. We wanted diversity to happen organically, but at the same time we had to be intentional about diversity and changing the perception of the culture. The atmosphere is warm and inviting to people of all races, and we want to be radical in our hospitality because we believe this is exemplary of what Jesus would want us to do,” concluded Cattenhead.

After Cattenhead graduated from Lake City High, he completed his undergraduate studies at the University of South Carolina, earned a master’s in human resources, a master’s in divinity, and is currently working on earning a PhD. Cattenhead is married to his childhood sweetheart, and they have three boys.

Cattenhead was very emotional and candid about being where he is in his life and career after such humble beginnings. “I never imagined I would be at this place. Considering the things that I have seen and experienced, statistically, I shouldn’t be there. It was divine grace that placed me in this position, and I accept my role in this spiritual journey.”



PROPER PERSPECTIVE

Submitted by *Vincia Blaise*



Vincia Blaise

Have you ever faced a loss so great, the pain and grief brings you to your knees? Have you ever been so distraught by disappointment you felt crippled or paralyzed by life? What do we do when God's answer to our prayer is far from the response we hope for?

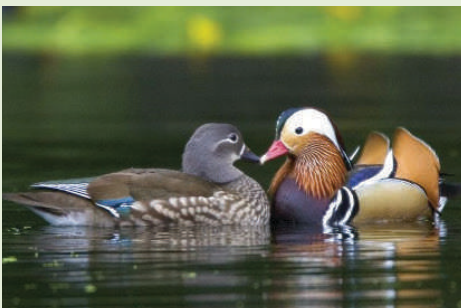
When God says "No," it is oftentimes devastating. When He says, "Not yet," foundations are often shaken, but we need to hold on to His unchanging Word. God is not a man

that He should lie, and our promises in Him are YES and AMEN. I can say this confidently even knowing it's that last thing I wanted to hear while in the midst of my turmoil. I can say it because looking back, I realize God was with me every step of the way. He never leaves or forsakes His own.

I stood holding the hand that had so often patted my back encouragingly, and as I leaned in trying to find a space not connected to a tube or covered with medical tape, my heart leaped within my chest. I thought I felt movement in the frail fingers that had just rested in my grasp. "I'm here, Barbie. Momma, if you are aware that I'm with you, squeeze my hand again." Moments passed by but nothing, no movement, no blinking, nothing. "God, please don't take my friend, more than a friend, more like a mother, God please," I cried aloud. My arm rested on the safety rail of her hospital bed cluttered by life saving medical equipment, wires and more plastic tubing. The ice cold metal from the safety rail caused a shiver to run throughout my body as I recognized the stark similarity to the cold feeling of her lifeless hand.

Brain dead is what the nurse had said. I reminded myself that my God is a miracle worker. The doctor reported that she had suffered such a significant lack of oxygen, that the prognosis was less than promising, but my God promises healing and He keeps His promises – another reminder. I had the audacity to enter into negotiations with God. "Lord, if You restore Barbie, I promise--" (One ridiculous commitment after another as though I wasn't addressing the eternal wise God.)

Healing didn't come to my loved one as I'd hoped. Earthly restoration that I had prayed for and confessed and declared wasn't what I'd received. Instead, Barbie slipped quietly from my life into eternal rest, and I slipped into despair and disappointment. I handed the key to my emotional freedom over to the fear of loss, and that imprisonment seemed as though it would be a permanent state as I grappled with grief when loss was realized. I remained captive by frustration, confusion, anger, sorrow and fear for much too long. Improper perspective immobilized me until The Holy Spirit helped me refocus against surmountable odds.



I had often misused the analogy of a floating duck to describe the recuperative process when told my expression of grief was totally normal, or God understood and was keeping me strong. On the surface, I'd smile and say, "I'm like a duck

floating on water. To those watching, they only witness the effortless grace of the duck gliding across the water, but no one knew how hard those webbed feet are paddling underneath the surface just to stay afloat."

My comparison was to my daily struggle against depression and doubt, seemingly calm on the surface, but paddling furiously to appear jubilant, positive and engaged. In my personal devotions one morning, I read James 1:2-4. 2: "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds." 3: "Because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance." 4: "Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

I thought, "Really God? You want me to find joy in this? The woman who considered me the daughter she never had is dead! A pillar, an ear or shoulder, you took her and now I'm to consider it joy? I don't think so! I stood on faith and trusted you to heal her."

"Trust me now." A crown of life kept looping in my head, so I Googled, "What does the Bible say about a crown of life?" by God's leading, I'm sure. James 1:2 was the first scripture that came up saying, "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

The Holy Spirit also reminded me of how much Barbie loved God, and I smiled as I thought of her receiving her crown of life. I went on to read Romans 5:3: "Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance." 5:4: "perseverance, character; and character, hope." 5:5: "And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

Proper perspective would remove our focus from the trial and place it on God. Curiosity and careful research showed me that my duck metaphor was wrong. Ducks don't paddle to stay afloat. They float because their bodies are naturally stable in water, and they weigh less than the weight of the water they displace. Ducks have, among other features, hollow bones and air sacs within their bodies that enable them to achieve such buoyancy. They also have special adaptation to help them float. A gland, near the duck's tail, secretes oil that it spreads over its feathers preventing the feathers from collecting water, increasing the duck's mass and potentially causing it to drown. In fact, ducks only need to paddle to move or resist water currents. Why was this important?

Proper perspective shows us that just like the duck was created and has innate ability to float, so we have been created (established) to win in every trial. Proper perspective shows us that there is purpose, wisdom and comfort in every single trial.

The Lord would first have us know that there is purpose in trials. When difficult times come into our lives, and we find ourselves unable to understand, the enemy is quick to throw doubt into our minds. We find ourselves questioning God for allowing things to happen. We may be bitter and angry with God for allowing trouble and pain. But God's word confidently reminds us that God understands. Things do not just happen haphazardly to Christians. There's meaning and purpose. God is always in control and nothing can separate us from His love.

God wants me to trust Him in the trials of life. As we trust Him, God can use the difficult trial to mold and mature us so that we will be more like Jesus Christ our Savior. Remembering my negotiation phase with God caused me to repent heavy heartedly. About trying to comprehend God's ways the Prophet Isaiah said: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways my ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9).

God would have us trust Him in difficult trials even though we don't understand. He loves us, and He is in control and uses every trial to mature us spiritually, polishing us until we are genuine reflections of Himself. It ALL works for our Good and His Glory.

EDUCATION FOUNDATION AWARDS MORE THAN \$15,000 TO TEACHERS

Submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist

DARLINGTON– Nearly two dozen teachers across the Darlington County School District will benefit from more than \$15,000 in grants from the Darlington County Education Foundation (DCEF).

Barbara Lee, director of the DCEF, surprised those teachers in their classrooms recently, marking another exciting year of grant presentations. This year, the DCEF awarded 12 grants totaling \$15,220. Superintendent Dr. Eddie Ingram praised the DCEF for continuing to support the district’s teachers and students.

“We are very excited that the Darlington County Education Foundation not only has a long history of supporting our school district but also makes a concerted effort to increase that amount of support each year,” Ingram said. “The foundation is a key community partner for the district. We thank the foundation for helping our teachers provide the best educational experiences possible for our students.”

After an application period earlier this year, the DCEF awarded grants to teachers at 11 different schools to fund a wide variety of projects, including the purchase of library books and periodicals, technology, innovative classroom seating, life skills training, tutoring, healthy living materials and playground equipment.

“The highlight of my first year as executive director of the Darlington County Education Foundation was the immensely gratifying experience of awarding grants to teachers that work so hard each day,” Lee said. “Seeing the excitement and joy expressed by the teachers and principals provided a visible example of their passion for the well-being of students in the Darlington County School District.”

Jerry Cheatham, president of the DCEF, said the foundation is honored to support teachers and their classrooms.

“We were very pleased to be able to provide financial support for projects that help motivate teachers and enrich the educational experience of our students,” Cheatham said.

The DCEF received funding for the grant program from sponsors for the “Go Big Hartsville” event, which was held on April 29 in Hartsville. The event was a reunion for the town and provided a platform to highlight the work of the DCEF.

“We would like to thank all of our generous sponsors and attendees that made it possible to award the many grants to our schools,” Lee said.

The grants awarded by the DCEF for 2017 are:



Southside Early Childhood Center’s Stephanie Hall, Kathy Wilkinson, Kelley Israel and Andrea Pulling accept a grant for \$2,982.95 from the Darlington County Education Foundation for outdoor exercise equipment for students.

- \$2,983 for “A ‘Special’ Kind of Play,” which will provide outdoor play equipment for all of the exceptional education classes at Southside Early Childhood Center. This will provide these students their own playground to meet their needs more effectively.
- \$1,239 for “There CAN Be More to Digital Learning Than Just Swiping,” which uses technology to encourage creative thinking in a small group setting. With OSMO technology, the screen is connected to tangible, holistic manipulatives that take gaming beyond the screen and into the physical world for first and second graders at Carolina Elementary School.

• \$1,500 for “Growing Independent Skills,” which will provide exceptional students at Hartsville Middle School the means and skills to start and maintain a garden as well as provide jobskills related to gardening and farming.

• \$1,000 for “Life Begins At The Library,” which will purchase new library books for third, fourth and fifth graders at Spaulding Elementary



Carolina Elementary’s Julie Hanlin accepts a grant for \$1,239 from the Darlington County Education Foundation for a small-group, technology-focused program.



Hartsville Middle’s Lara Matthews and Carolyn Toomer accept a grant for \$1,500 from the Darlington County Education Foundation for a gardening program.



Spaulding Elementary’s Tracie Lewis accepts a grant for \$1,000 from the Darlington County Education Foundation to purchase new library books for third through fifth graders.



North Hartsville Elementary’s Kristen Nicholson and Mona Newsome accept a grant for \$1,500 from the Darlington County Education Foundation to update the school’s media center.

School.

- \$1,500 for “The Reading Roost,” which will update the media center at North Hartsville Elementary School to rejuvenate learners and inspire personal creativity.

- \$254 for “Chute, We Love the Outdoors,” which will purchase materials for indoor and outdoor experiences for 4K students at Southside Early Childhood Center.

- \$1,000 for “Oh, How I Love Informational Text,” which will create an informational text classroom library of magazines, newspapers, non-fiction texts and audio correspondence for sixth graders at Darlington Middle School.

- \$324 for “Café Connect: Experiencing Life One Cup At A Time,” which will provide an opportunity for students in Darlington High School’s moderate intellectual disabilities self-contained program to experience and gain a variety of work and social skills that will help them become successful and participating members of their local community.

- \$1,000 for “Academic Football Coach” at Hartsville High School, which is a program designed to encourage and motivate high academic standards.

- \$750 for “Pate is Walking Across America,” which will incorporate daily walking into a fun adventure that will lead second graders across a virtual America. Pedometers will be given to children where they will develop a healthy habit of walking, nutrition and geography.

- \$750 for “Dump the Desks, Find Your Best Learning Spot,” which will bring flexible seating into the classroom at St. John’s Elementary School so students can learn while being

comfortable.

- \$2,921 for “Can’t We All Get Along,” which will focus on Lego Therapy during small group counseling sessions and the Lego Education Curriculum during classroom guidance at Brunson-Dargan Elementary School. The Lego curriculum will help inspire the students to get along and grow creatively and academically.

Founded in 1998 by parents, business partners and community leaders, the DCEF is “determined to provide additional support and public recognition for outstanding public school educators who daily invest their lives in the children of the Darlington County School District,” according to the foundation’s website. For more information, please visit www.TheDCEF.org.

FELLOWS PROGRAM GOES BEHIND THE SCENES IN FSD1

Submitted by the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce



Fellows in Education 2017 Graduating Class

The Fellows program is designed to give local leaders a unique, behind-the-scenes look into several schools within Florence School District One (FSD1). Over the course of about eight months, leaders will see firsthand some of the daily struggles and constraints educators face in the classroom. Leaders will hear about seismic shifts in student needs and the additional state and federal requirements now placed on schools, teachers and administrators in Florence District One.

Each month's program will center on a different educational experience that is unique to the classroom. The Fellows in Education program will offer opportunities for community leaders to contribute to the development of better education policies in the communities in which they live and work.

Within the Fellows program there will be an opportunity for interested participants to take part in a "Principal for a Day" exercise. This will allow someone to spend a portion of a day with an area school principal while conducting the daily duties of running the school. We strongly encourage participants to schedule their "Principal for a Day" opportunity between Sept. 21 and Oct. 3 - before campus sessions begin.

Twenty-three community and business leaders received certificates for completing the Fellows in Education Program during a luncheon at the Florence Chamber of Commerce in May. This is a joint program between FSD1, The School Foundation and the Greater Florence Chamber of

Commerce. During the program, participants met eight times to tour schools and learn about student needs and the state and federal requirements placed on schools, teachers and administrators in FSD1.

The goal of the Fellows in Education Program is that current and past participants may share firsthand knowledge in their circles and help collaborate with policy makers and the community on educational concerns.

Michele Pridgen, assistant manager of administration at Honda of South Carolina, said that bringing together leaders from a variety of backgrounds contributed to the program's effectiveness in the community.

"Developing an eclectic group in the program is really ingenious," Pridgen said. "It allows you to go back to your perspective company and to represent what is going on in the education scene."

Katie Wilcox, who works in marketing and business development at Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, said that she grew up attending FSD1 schools, but participating in the Fellows in Education Program positively exposed her to new schools and people.

"I was very impressed with the curriculum that they are teaching to the elementary kids," Wilcox said. "Also, the teachers are doing the best they can with what they have."

To commemorate the completion of the program, participants received a framed certificate as they were congratulated by FSD1 Superintendent Dr. Randy Bridges, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce President Michael Miller, and The School Foundation Executive Director Debbie Hyler.

For more information on the Fellows in Education program, please contact: Debbie Hyler, Executive Director, The School Foundation 843-662-9996 or dhyler@theschoolfoundation.org Michael Miller, President, Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce 843-665-0515 or mmiller@flochamber.com

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FDTC HOSTS CATERPILLAR THINKBIG GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Submitted by FDTC



The Southeastern Institute of Manufacturing and Technology hosted Caterpillar Inc.'s ThinkBIG Global Conference

The Southeastern Institute of Manufacturing and Technology (SiMT) located on the main campus of Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) hosted Caterpillar Inc.'s ThinkBIG Global Conference on May 23.

Caterpillar Inc. ThinkBIG representatives from nine countries and 12 states met at the SiMT for the conference that only occurs every two years. This year's conference marked the first time that FDTC has served as the event's host. The Caterpillar Dealer Academy has been operating at FDTC for 17 years, and it has placed many graduates in the workforce at Blanchard Machinery, Carolina CAT and Gregory Poole. Once the course is completed, students obtain an associate in applied science degree with a major in diesel technology.

"It is an honor to be selected as the host of the 2017 Global ThinkBIG conference," said Stephen Murphey, Director of the Caterpillar Dealer Academy at FDTC. "I have been a part of the global network of ThinkBIG instructors since 2008, and it is enjoyable to see my fellow administrators and instructors gathering for this year's

conference."

While at the college, business was conducted and attendees toured FDTC. Following a full day of work, Caterpillar Inc. ThinkBIG attendees traveled to Darlington Raceway, where they were treated to a speech from Gregory Poole III, whose family founded the Gregory Poole Equipment Company, the Caterpillar distributor for Eastern North Carolina with 23 locations. Also on-site at the racetrack was Florence-Darlington Technical College's Super Truck. Driver Hayes Goodson signed autographs for those in attendance. Richard Childress Racing also had Ryan Newman's Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series No. 31 Caterpillar Chevrolet in the track's Cale Yarborough Garage.

The Caterpillar Inc. ThinkBIG institutions that were in attendance included: BRP (IIASA), Ecuador; BRP (IIASA), Panama; Florence-Darlington Technical College; Finning Academy, England; Grande Prairie Regional/College, Canada; Lake Area Technical Institute; South Dakota; Mesa Community College Empire Cat, Arizona; North Dakota State College of Science; Oklahoma State University - Institute of Technology; Owens Community College, Ohio; Pittsburg State University, Kansas; Portland Community College, Oregon; San Joaquin Delta College, California; State Technical College of Missouri; South Georgia Technical College; TECSUP (Ferreyos), Arequipa, Peru; TECSUP (Ferreyos), Lima, Peru; and Universidad Tecnologica de Jalisco (TRACSA), Mexico.

For more information on the Caterpillar Dealer Academy at FDTC, please contact Director Stephen Murphey by emailing Stephen.Murphey@fdtc.edu or calling 843-661-8187.

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ONLINE EDUCATION AT CCU

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Dr. Sherri Restauri

CONWAY-The possibilities are limitless when it comes to online education, and the director of the Coastal Office of Online Learning at Coastal Carolina University (CCU) is committed to providing excellent online education opportunities for both the traditional and nontraditional student.

As college students find themselves with other obligations beyond that of seeking a degree, such as commitments to families and jobs, Sherri Restauri, Ph.D., knows they have less time to complete a traditional college education. Online classes a critical component of the modern-day student's education so assignments and studying can be completed on individual schedules.

More than the convenience, Restauri says, online learning offers opportunities for all who desire to remain competitive in the workforce, who want to continue an education placed on hold due to life circumstances, or for anyone who just wants to keep learning.

"Most students select to pursue online learning due to the convenience that it provides them, as they are more likely to be engaged in professional and/or personal pursuits that require a significant amount of their time and energy, such as working part or full time and having a family," says Restauri. "But there is no limit to the advantages an online education has to offer."

Restauri began her career as the director of online learning at CCU on July 1, 2016. She worked as a director of online learning and state authorization at University of Alabama in Huntsville from 2009-2016 and as the director of distance education at Jacksonville State University from 2001-2009. She believes it is imperative to keep her hands in teaching to properly guide the development of the online learning program authentically, so she also currently serves as a teaching associate for the Department of Psychology at CCU.

The mission of Coastal's Office of Online Learning (COOL) is to advance the University's ability to offer high-quality and high-value online courses and programs that target in-demand content areas aligned to the academic strengths of the University. Courses and programs are offered at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels, and several degree programs can be completed entirely online.

Online students at CCU can earn a master's degree in information systems technology, special education, literacy or instructional technology. Undergraduate programs include health administration, marketing, and hospitality, resort and tourism management.

As the director of COOL, Restauri is responsible for the oversight of the online courses and programs offered by the CCU campus. This involves providing guidance in the course development and proposal process; course quality and program quality review; promotion and advertisement; student recruitment; and oversight to the institution's guiding best practices and policies relating to online and hybrid course and program offerings.

Courses taught in the online environment are developed with the same rigor as traditional, face-to-face classes. Students who participate in CCU's online programs come from all walks of life and backgrounds.

CCU's online program had a total enrollment of 3,670 students registered in a distance learning class during the fall of 2016. The students were across all age ranges and genders, were both in- and out-of-state, and were enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate courses and programs.

Coastal Carolina University was ranked the No. 3 Best Online College in South Carolina for 2016-2017 by Affordable Colleges Online, a resource for online learning and college affordability information. Restauri and her staff are committed to the continued excellence of the students and the online program. Find out about online learning opportunities at CCU here: www.coastal.edu/online.

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FSD1 MAJOR AND MINI GRANTS FOR 2017-2018

Submitted by Debbie Hylar, Executive Director

MAJOR GRANTS 2017 - 2018

Engineering a Smart Start

Project Director – Calandra Brisbane

Co-Project Director – Dohnia Galloway

Carver Elementary School - \$73,370.20



2017-2018 Grant Recipients

Students must be engaged to become productive participants and gain ownership in their learning. Carver Elementary educators are committed to creating an atmosphere that is conducive to personalized learning where students are intrinsically motivated to explain and engineer solutions to problems. Engineering a Smart Start is designed to engage, motivate and empower students to build 21st century skills so they can compete in a global economy. Science, technology, engineering, and math are beneficial and necessary components of STEM careers, and yet our students tend to struggle with basic mathematical attributes and the ability to adapt to technological changes. Our current MAP data shows a need for our students' math and technology skills to be expanded using Creative Learning Systems, SmartLab. SmartLab is designed to stimulate student interest in critical thinking and problem solving in order to build math and technology proficiency through scientific explorations.

The implementation of a SmartLab will challenge Carver students to extend their math knowledge using innovative technology and real world applications. This learning environment will include technology equipment such as digital interactive tablets, furnishings such as collaboration tables and storage, robotics construction kits, engineering software, and the Creative Learning Systems Learning Launcher Curriculum. SmartLab provides us with the vehicle to increase student math and technology achievement while at the same time enhancing our school and district initiative of our STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) curriculum. This core curriculum is integrated into all subject areas in the classroom and in all related arts (including art, music, physical education, science learning lab and our library) classes at Carver Elementary. The students of Carver will benefit from a place with limitless boundaries, such as the SmartLab. "A place with no boundaries means kids exceed anything you ever expected" (SmartLab Pamphlet, p. 8).

E-ssential E-Books

Project Director – Amy Rhodes

Co-Project Directors – Dohnia Galloway, Sarah Sparkman, Kelli Becote, Susan Lane, Barbara Green, Robin Horne, Cathryn Garland Briggs, Carver, Delmae, and Timrod Elementary Schools, Moore Intermediate, Southside Middle School, Wilson High School – \$50,250

This grant will provide seven schools in Florence School District One with a basic nonfiction eBook collection to support the district One-to-One (1:1) initiative, online standardized testing and the South Carolina's Read to Succeed initiative, legislation which is dedicated to improving literacy for South Carolina students. Teachers and students will be trained in how to use Destiny (FSD1's current library circulation management system) to access the eBooks. Teachers will be given the opportunity to attend a book talk and get extension ideas on how to use the books within their curriculums. Students will participate in a book talk and will be encouraged to read eBooks to increase exposure to digital resources in preparation for online standardized testing.

Digital collections will be increased by 100-125 titles at each of these

schools. These eBooks will be permanent in each collection and will not require a yearly subscription fee. This grant will provide an expansion to teachers' classroom libraries and students' home libraries as they will be able to access these books 24/7, which will allow for greater ease in meeting the state's Read to Succeed initiative and will help prevent summer reading loss for students.

Field Trips Without Wheels

Project Director – Stephanie Thomas

Co-Project Director – Sandra Craddock

McLaurin Elementary School - \$21,073.82

The purpose of this proposal is to narrow and ultimately close the achievement gap that exists between groups of children as measured by the SC Ready state tests given in the spring of each year.

Two of the reasons that the achievement gap exists are (1) children entering school without the necessary background knowledge and (2) inadequate vocabulary. Many children are behind just because of where they live and the poverty within the environment. We have learned through research that some schools have had success using field trips to build background knowledge for children who do not have personal experiences on which to attach their new learning.

Our teachers generally provide one field trip for their students each year. Because many of our children cannot afford the cost of a field trip, we have had fundraisers and/or collected donations to provide for those who are among the less fortunate. Because traditional field trips are costly and often logistically impossible and because of what we have read, we began to think creatively and came up with the innovative idea of virtual field trips.

Through virtual reality (VR) field trips, students are not limited to places close to the school...they can explore the whole universe without leaving the classroom. With a headset and an accompanying technology device, students can experience a magical VR trip. The teacher has a tablet from which to navigate the excursion. Student devices are synced with the teacher's tablet and from there the trip is easy. VR excursions can support all content areas. Teachers will expect and encourage students to read fiction and informational text that connect the VR trips to state standards for reading, science, social studies, mathematics, writing and inquiry.

Gators Grasping Literacy Through Google

Project Director – April Leroy

Co-Project Directors – Haley Taylor, Margaret Henry, Crystal Deas, Samantha Broughton, Kelly Weiss

Savannah Grove Elementary School - \$3,631.59

Our mission at Savannah Grove Elementary School is to effectively prepare all students for the 21st century by utilizing research based educational practices. Therefore, our goal with this grant is to provide our students in third through sixth grades with the opportunity to maximize their learning by using technology. We strongly believe this initiative will help Savannah Grove effectively weave technology into the curriculum and instruction to improve student learning, increase learning opportunities and collaboration, and encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.

Our explicit goal is to implement Google resources and other online programs utilizing Chromebooks for our third through sixth grade students. In order to achieve this goal and to better prepare students for the future, we need to purchase additional Chromebooks for our school. This grant will address multiple needs observed in our school. First, our students have the need for daily use of technology. Second, our students have the need to be exposed to an ever-changing world. Third, this will allow them to be part of a Chromebook Classroom. By using Google resources in addition to other online programs for education, the Chromebooks will allow us to better meet each student's individual needs. The integration of technology embedded in daily instruction is a great way to reach our diverse learning styles.

Savannah Grove is currently ranked in the bottom two schools in Florence School District One for ELA according to the 2016 SC READY State Assessment data. This data drove our crusade to find alternative ways to

FSD1 MAJOR AND MINI GRANTS FOR 2017-2018 CONT'D

facilitate learning at Savannah Grove. It is critical that we help our students. We researched for a solution that would maximize student learning. Since technology has become an increasingly important and necessary tool in education, we need this opportunity for Savannah Grove students. Chromebooks will help maximize instructional time and increase student engagement. This plan will allow teachers to better meet individual student needs and facilitate the learning of each student. The Chromebooks will allow us to have a learning community where all students are engaged, working independently on assignments and/or collaborating in groups. By using the Chromebooks daily, we will increase the students' motivation, confidence and independence to become successful, productive learners. It is critical that we implement Chromebook Classrooms at Savannah Grove for our students.

MINI GRANTS 2017 - 2018

Coding in a Dash

Erika Hartman

Lucy T. Davis Elementary School - \$496.74

I am requesting the Dash robot with the additional accessories and a curriculum subscription to motivate and challenge students to learn and practice such skills as problem solving, collaboration, troubleshooting and reasoning. These 21st century competencies can be introduced and mastered through using Dash, which is a kid-friendly programmable robot. In addition, the robot allows for student creativity to interact and explore coding, logic and mathematics. Students in all grade levels can use Dash to learn or practice a variety of mathematical and spatial concepts.

Dashing into Robotics & Coding

Marianne Gaskins and Marci Gatewood

Royall Elementary School - \$496.70

Robots are an excellent way for students to demonstrate coding skills. Our school has two Dash robots. With these robots and the Blockly application on the iPads, primary students have been able to program the robots for use in a variety of classes. Participating in the Wonder League Robotics Competition

will build on these skills. However, in order to participate in the robotics competition, it is necessary for a team to have access to a Dash robot, Dot robot, launching accessory, iPad and competition mat. I am asking for two Dot robots to pair with our school's existing Dash robots, launcher accessories, and one complete competition set which includes a third pair of Dash and Dot robots plus a competition mat. The addition of these materials will allow multiple teams of students to participate in this competition.

I am Proactive – I am in Charge of Me!

Jennifer Coleman

Briggs Elementary School - \$496.73

The grant, "I am Proactive-I am in Charge of Me!" is designed to help tie our "Leader in Me" theory more across the curriculum. "Leader in Me" teaches the children that they are in charge of themselves. No one else can do that for them. Earning honor roll, perfect attendance and/or reaching math facts goals are all something that only the students are in charge of. Something this simple can make a huge difference for a child who is never recognized for anything positive that they do at school. The goal of our grant is to allow students to be recognized for various things in ways that they can display their achievements and grow on them throughout the year.

Translating Education for a Growing Global Community

Debbie Heimbrook and Sara McSwain

Lucy T. Davis Elementary School/John W. Moore Intermediate School - \$200

This grant will allow for the purchase of Speak & Translate apps for each school in FSD1. This will assist in communicating with parents/guardians who do not speak English well or at all. Currently, there are over 500 students who speak a language other than English in their homes. There are over 21 foreign languages spoken in these homes.

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Mr. Alphonso Bradley, Director

GSSM FOUNDATION RECEIVES GRANT FROM MONSANTO FUND

Submitted by Lauren Shirley, PR & Marketing Coordinator

MONSANTO Fund



COLUMBIA – The South Carolina Governor’s School for Science & Mathematics Foundation (GSSM-F) recently received a \$10,000 grant from the Monsanto Fund’s 2017 Site Grant Initiative in support of GSSM’s GoSciTech residential summer camp for rising 8-10th graders.

Monsanto’s investment makes scholarships and financial aid possible for students from across the state attending GoSciTech, which is offered for up to four weeks each summer on the School’s Hartsville campus. GoSciTech provides 30 different STEM courses to choose from including opportunities to explore pre-med, anatomy, engineering and video game development.

“We are incredibly grateful for this generous investment from Monsanto,” said Kim Bowman, CEO, GSSM Foundation and EVP Strategic Direction, GSSM. “With their support, GSSM is able to reach more students statewide, as well as spread our unmatched STEM impact through a quality summer experience.”

GSSM previously received a Monsanto Fund site grant in 2015 for its statewide satellite summer camps, CREATEng and iTEAMS Xtreme.

“We’re very honored to be able to support GSSM with this Monsanto

Fund Grant. Through the GoSciTech program, GSSM exposes many students in South Carolina to excellent programs in science and math and provides challenging and life-changing experience to many students who would otherwise not have those opportunities,” said Dawn Fraser, commercial development breeder for Monsanto located at the Hartsville site. “Having these types of opportunities can enable a life-long love of science and math and help to shape the future paths of these students so that they move into STEM related careers.”

This year, the Monsanto Fund awarded more than \$1.4 million to nonprofit organizations through its site grant initiative to help address essential needs in rural communities. Nonprofit organizations across the U.S. have received more than \$7.5 million through this program over the last five years.

About the Monsanto Fund

The Monsanto Fund, the philanthropic arm of the Monsanto Company, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where farmers and Monsanto Company employees live and work. Visit the Monsanto Fund at www.monsantofund.org.

About GSSM

Founded in 1988 as a model for advanced STEM education in South Carolina, GSSM serves nearly 400 of the state’s most promising scholars in the 10th through 12th grades through its nationally recognized residential and virtual programs. The school offers the most advanced courses in science, mathematics and engineering at its campus in Hartsville and virtually to participating school districts across the state. GSSM’s Outreach and teacher development programs serve thousands of students in schools throughout South Carolina each year. Learn more by visiting www.scgssm.org.



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FCC OFFERS LAW ENFORCEMENT CLASSES TO STUDENTS

by Les Echols



Warren Poston

Law enforcement is a key component in the development of communities and nations. But often youth are not encouraged or trained to go into law enforcement early. The Florence Career Center has developed a law enforcement class that fills this gap. The main goal of the course is to prepare high school students for a career in the law enforcement field.

The Law Enforcement Services class is broken down into two separate classes: Law Enforcement Services I and Law Enforcement Services II. Law Enforcement Services I is an introduction into the law enforcement field. In Law Enforcement Services I, students learn about the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the important court cases that have determined the boundaries for law enforcement officers' actions. Students learn about certain South Carolina criminal laws and about the many federal, state and local law enforcement agencies that enforce laws. Students also learn the basic hands-on part of the law enforcement job such as writing incident reports, courtesy summons, arrest warrants, and search warrants. They learn how to handcuff suspects and how to conduct a traffic stop. Students must also learn about the physical, mental and ethical issues that go along with working in the law enforcement field. After completing Law Enforcement Services I, students who wish to continue their study in the field of Law Enforcement and has the instructor recommendation can take Law Enforcement Services II.

Law Enforcement Services II goes more in-depth into the law enforcement field. Students receive more hands-on training, such as processing crime scenes, clearing buildings when looking for a suspect, patrol procedures, and narcotics investigations. Students also learn the important aspect of testifying in court. Essentially, when a student completes the Law Enforcement Services program he or she will have been given the same knowledge and skills as an officer that has just graduated from the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.



Warren Poston is the instructor for the law enforcement classes. His job is to teach the students the necessary information and skills they will need to be a good law enforcement officer in the future. Poston, who has lived in Florence County his entire life, graduated from

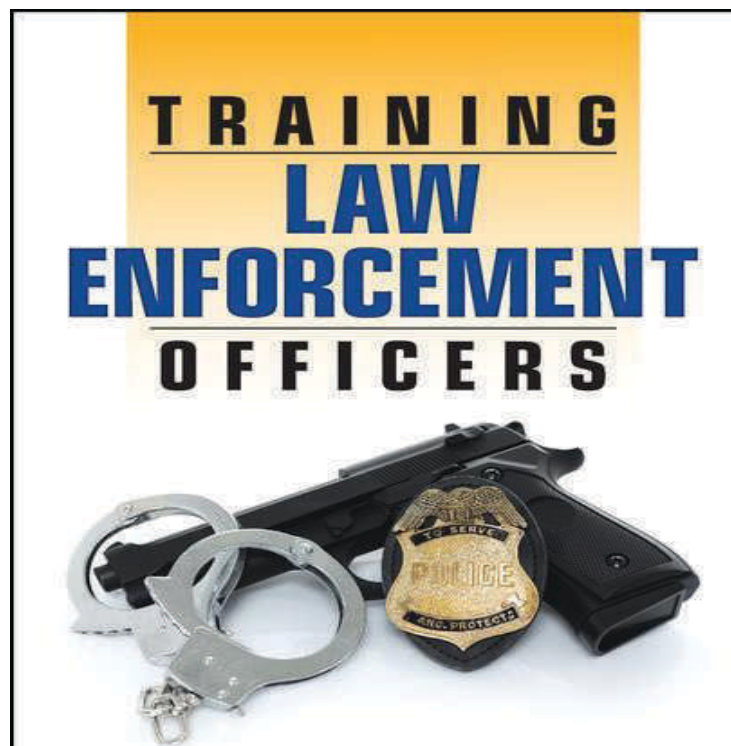
Hannah-Pamplico High School in 1996. He has an associate degree in criminal justice from Florence-Darlington Technical College and a B.S. in psychology from Francis Marion University. He has been in law enforcement for 15 years with most that time spent with the Florence County Sheriff's Office where he worked patrol, investigations, and as a school resource officer.

When asked why these courses are important, Poston went into detail. "I think this course is important because students can take this course and decide if law enforcement is the correct profession for them. Although I am disappointed when good students decide to pursue other professions in the long run, it is better for them and the agency that may have hired them in the future. Law enforcement agencies sometimes send officers to the Criminal Justice Academy for 12 weeks of training

to only have those same officers quit after a year or two on the job because they realize it is not the right profession. This program allows those students to make that decision in high school so they do not waste time and money," concluded Poston.

Per Poston, the program has just purchased a firearm simulator from TI Training that will now allow the students to step into the shoes of a law enforcement officer and see how they would react to a situation. The system works by projecting a recorded scenario onto a 12-foot wide screen, and the student must decide how to handle the situation. The students can try to resolve the issue presented to them by using just their words or a weapon such as pepper spray, a Taser, or a firearm. As the system operator, Poston can make some of the scenarios change depending on the students' response to what is happening on the screen. If a student pulls his or her firearm, he or she can make the actors on the screen react to the firearm being pulled either by complying with the orders or by making the actor on screen escalate the situation by running at the student. Once the scenario has run its course, the student must explain his or her actions. The system has over 800 scenarios pre-loaded onto it, and every three months an update is sent out by the company that contains scenarios of officer-involved shootings that have just happened in the real world.

"It has been interesting watching the student's mentality of officer-involved shootings change after using the system," Poston. "The purpose of the system is to train the students how to respond to a threat properly and be able to articulate their decision for that response, but at the same time it shows them that making that decision in a split second when your life is on the line is a lot harder than making that decision sitting comfortably in front of your television, watching it on the news."



MCLEOD HEALTH AWARDS \$75,000 TO FDTC

Submitted by FDTC



The McLeod Health Foundation presented Florence-Darlington Technical College with a \$75,000 on May 25 at its Health Sciences Campus in Downtown Florence.

The McLeod Health Foundation presented Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) with a \$75,000 check for its Nursing Program in May. McLeod's gift was presented to FDTC at the Health Sciences Campus located on Cheves St. in Downtown Florence. The annual contribution given to FDTC provides nursing scholarships to educate and train the hospital's workforce. McLeod Health Senior Vice President Tim Hess said, "We've had a longstanding relationship with Tech in many areas, but our recruiters, our nursing directors, our managers and our patients rely on the students that come from Tech to make sure that we have an adequate workforce to provide the high level of patient care that we're

known for."

With more than 100 students completing the nursing program each year, FDTC has become a reliable source of job candidates. In fact, the Nursing Program's student quality is helping pave the way for future graduates. McLeod Health Regional Medical Center depends on highly trained graduates to further its advancement in the healthcare field.

Hess said, "The partnership has been working for a number of years, and we look forward to a long and fruitful future because the predictions for the workforce needs in the future are certainly saying that we're going to have to continue to produce high quality, high caliber staff."

Executive Director of the FDTC Educational Foundation Jill Lewis said, "We are extremely grateful for McLeod Health's longstanding partnership and support. This additional funding impacts so many individual students and improves the quality of healthcare in the Pee Dee region."

For more information on Florence-Darlington Technical College's Nursing Program, please visit www.fdtc.edu.

CLASS OF 2017 COMPLETES ACCELERATE

Submitted by Lauren Shirley, PR & Marketing Coordinator



Class of 2017

students in the second graduating class of Accelerate, the South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics' (GSSM) virtual engineering program, received their certificates of completion in May at the Capitol City Club in Columbia.

The students represent six South Carolina high schools: Academy for

COLUMBIA— The students in the second graduating class of Accelerate, the South Carolina Governor's School for Science & Mathematics' (GSSM) virtual engineering

Arts, Science and Technology in Myrtle Beach, J.L. Mann High School in Greenville, Lexington High School in Lexington, River Bluff High School in Lexington, Summerville High School in Summerville, and White Knoll High School in Lexington. The recognition and completion ceremony was designed to celebrate their achievements and successful completion of this one-of-a-kind, three-year engineering program.

Originally launched with private support, Accelerate is currently funded through the South Carolina General Assembly and corporate partnerships. The program emphasizes mastery of the foundational tools of engineering, such as physics, calculus and chemistry, but it also places significant emphasis on real-world, team-based projects, creativity and communication.



Barbara Wallace
Grandmother of Scholarship Recipient



FIVE FMU GRADS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS BLACKWELL AWARD

Submitted by FMU



Reba Gaskins, Rebecca Cross, Margaret Evans and Devin Kellis pose for a photo prior to the beginning of commencement ceremonies at Francis Marion University on May 6. Gaskins, Cross, Evans and Kellis - along with Natalie Stirewalt, who was unable to attend commencement - received the prestigious Blackwell Award for their superb academic achievements.

Francis Marion University graduates Rebecca Cross, Devin Kellis, Margaret Evans, Natalie Stirewalt and Reba Gaskins received the William H. Blackwell Award during the spring commencement exercises at the Smith Center on May 6.

The Blackwell Award is named in memory of the founding chairman of the FMU Foundation and is presented to the undergraduate student, or students, with the highest grade

point average (for all academic work undertaken at FMU) of those graduating. Frank J. Brand, chair of the Foundation Board, presented the awards at the commencement.

Cross, originally from Darlington, double-majored in mass communication and Spanish. She served as staff writer and managing editor for The Patriot student newspaper and president of the Baptist Collegiate Ministry. She was also a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Sigma Delta Pi honor societies and is a recipient of many awards including the Duane P. Myers Honors Award, the Phi Kappa Phi Award and the Scholastic Achievement Award.

Kellis, a Florence native, double-majored in biology and psychology and minored in chemistry. He was a student marshal, president of the Biology Club, and a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Psi Chi, Beta Beta Beta,

and Gamma Sigma Epsilon honor societies as well as a recipient of many awards, including the most prestigious President's Undergraduate Research Award, the Phi Kappa Phi Award, the Duane P. Myers Honors Award and the Scholastic Achievement Award.

Originally from Marion, Evans majored in biology and minored in chemistry. She served as a student marshal and a consultant in biology and chemistry in the FMU Tutoring Center and the Chemistry Tutoring Center. Evans has been a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Beta Beta Beta and Gamma Sigma Epsilon honor societies.

Stirewalt, a Sumter native, double-majored in Spanish and history. She has served as a member of Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Alpha Theta and Sigma Delta Pi. Stirewalt is the recipient of the Scholastic Achievement Award and the Modern Language Award.

Gaskins, a product of Mount Pleasant, majored in accounting and completed her degree requirements in only three years. She also served as treasurer and vice-president of FMU Diplomats and is a member of Beta Gamma Sigma. Gaskins is a recipient of the 2017 Accounting Award and the Scholastic Achievement Award.

For more information, contact Matt McColl, Francis Marion University's director of media relations at mmccoll@fmarion.edu, 843-661-1227 or 843-687-0186.



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The Citadel - \$20,344

S.C. State - \$20,716

Clemson - \$21,612

USC - \$23,043



*Net price is the average amount students pay for tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies and other living expenses; minus the average amount of grant and scholarship aid students receive.

Source: CollegeFactual.com

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS OFFERED IN FLORENCE SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE

Submitted by Pamela Little-McDaniel, Florence District One, Director of Public Information



Principal Craig Washington shares the excitement of this year's Chrome Book Rollout at Southside Middle.

Holding fast to its goals of instructional improvement, which emphasize early childhood, literacy, mathematics and technology, Florence School District One continues to glean from successfully proven, researched-based programs to equip students with world-class skills and life-career characteristics. These educational options have catapulted Florence One into a flagship school system, which offers the best of innovative programs for parents and students within

the community.

To lead in the area of early childhood, a new RN Beck Early Learning Center is on the horizon. The 36, 000 square feet, 16 classroom facility will replace the existing school and will provide an updated learning space for pre-kindergarten students. The facility will have a large multipurpose room and a new playground area located within the interior perimeter of the building.

In a spring meeting of the Florence One Board of Trustees, the board approved the implementation of a school wide Montessori Program at McLaurin Elementary beginning in 2017-18. This program will provide an additional boost in the thrust toward early learning. Other programs in Florence One designed to affect early learners in grades K-4 include: literacy program called LightSail, Greenwood and McLaurin Elementary Schools; Spanish Language Immersion Program, Delmae Elementary; STEAM Magnet Program, AdvanceED STEM Certification, Carver Elementary; and Advancement Via Individual Determination program (AVID Program), Lucy T. Davis Elementary and Sneed Middle School.

The Florence One School Board also recently approved the implementation of the Primary Years International Baccalaureate Program at North Vista Elementary, grades K-6. For the second year in a row, parents and students at

Timrod Elementary are operating on a Year-Round School Calendar. Other innovative programs designed to enhance learning at K-6 elementary schools in Florence One are: The Leader in Me, Briggs Elementary; ClassWorks, Dewey L. Carter Elementary and Wallace Gregg Elementary; Google Classroom Teacher Certification and eSparks Learning, John W. Moore. Achieve 3000 has been implemented at both Lester and Timrod Elementary Schools. Other innovative learning programs include iStation, No Red Ink and zSpace, at Royall Elementary.

The Discovery Education Program continues to provide support and professional development for all elementary and middle teachers with emphasis on digital learning. Florence One also maintains its partnership with the Southern Region Education Board at its secondary schools to enhance literacy (Literacy Design Collaborative) and mathematics (Mathematics Design Collaborative) skills of students.

Other programs of choice at the middle school level include the Middle Years International Baccalaureate Program at Williams Middle; and AdvancED STEM Certification, One-to One Initiative, and Arts in Education, Southside Middle.

High schools provide the opportunity for students to take advantage of Dual Enrollment courses and Advanced Placement courses at each of the three locations--South Florence, West Florence and Wilson. Other specific high school choices for students are the One-to-One initiative at South Florence; AdvancED STEM Certification and Project Lead the Way programs at West Florence; and the Early College and International Baccalaureate Program at Wilson. These new and innovative initiatives are aimed at providing excellent opportunities for students to graduate from high school both college and career ready and are based on Florence One's mission to Educate! Prepare! and Inspire!

To receive specific information about each of these school programs, call Florence One at 843-673-1125.



Florence Public School District One Salutes Academic Excellence:

The Class of 2017

- 946 Graduates -

Scholarships Awarded Total More than \$35.3 Million



South Florence High School



West Florence High School



Wilson High School

The Class of 2017 Produced:

2 National Merit Finalists

49 SC Academic Achievement Honors Awardees

151 Board of Trustees Scholars

(Named by earning a Grade Point Average of 4.5 or higher in the Uniform Grading System)

54 Palmetto Fellows

(Named by earning a Grade Point Average of 3.5, a score of at least 1200 on the SAT, and/or a ranking in the top 5 percent of the graduating class)

259 Life Scholarship Winners

(Named by earning at least two of the following: a Grade Point Average of 3.0 or higher, a score of at least 1100 on the SAT, and/or a ranking in the top 30 percent of the graduating class)

153 Double Cord Graduates

(Named by earning a Grade Point Average of 4.0 - 4.99 in the Uniform Grading System)

288 Single Cord Graduates

(Named by earning a Grade Point Average of 3.0 - 3.99 in the Uniform Grading System)

Over 82 percent of the Class of 2017 will be attending post-secondary institutions this fall.

FMU DEGREE PROVING TO BE A BUOY FOR REGION'S ECONOMY

Articles submitted by FMU



Olivia Wilkes, Bryce Saunders, John Tellis and Dax Doctor take a look at efficiency formulas in class. The four constitute Francis Marion University's first class of industrial engineering graduates.

Three years ago, Francis Marion University launched its new Industrial Engineering (IE) degree program, seeking to support a growing need in local industries and provide the university's graduates with yet another meaningful career path.

The bold initiative bore its first fruit when the first class of IE grads received their diplomas at FMU's spring commencement ceremony.

The inaugural graduating class - Dax Doctor of Florence, Bryce Saunders of Aiken, John Tellis of Florence and Olivia Wilkes of Hartsville - is small, but it's the vanguard of a fast-growing program. University officials expect the number of graduates to more than quadruple in the next few years.

Dr. Lorna Cintron-Gonzalez, assistant professor of Industrial Engineering and the coordinator of the IE program, says a number of factors will drive that growth.

"It always takes awhile to get to the level that you want with a program, but we already see growth in the sizes (of the coming classes)," says Cintron-Gonzalez. "Next year, we're going to go through the process of accreditation from ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology, Inc.), which is a big appeal for other engineers... The father or the mother of a potential student, they see that this is accredited by ABET and that raises the prestige."

The program is a response from FMU President Dr. Fred Carter and other university leaders to a cry for help from local industry. Florence and the Pee Dee are home to a large number of industrial concerns that need skilled engineering professionals. Nearly all of them face some struggle in filling those jobs. A source of home-grown engineers was a logical solution.

"One of the main factors for the creation of the program was that industries in our area couldn't retain engineers that came from bigger cities or bigger universities because they're not rooted in this area," says Cintron-Gonzalez. "Our students are from around here, and they're interested in living and working in the Pee Dee. We're growing these

engineers to serve the region."

Says Florence native Tellis, who like all the members of the graduating class has enjoyed internships with several local companies, "My supervisors are constantly asking, 'You're going to be looking for a job in this area, right... You're going to have other engineers from other colleges outside of this area that might be willing come to the region, but they want engineers that will stay in this area.'"

The value of industrial engineers arises from their flexibility, which allows them to work within a variety of fields, including manufacturing, healthcare, consulting and engineering services and others. Their ability to find inefficiencies in a process and reformulate a more efficient process--in other words, to solve problems--offers businesses an adaptability not often seen from engineering graduates.

Wilkes says it's clear, from conversations with FMU faculty members and professionals already in the workplace, that industrial engineering will be one of the most in-demand degrees moving forward because of that versatility.

"My boss (at an internship) has said, 'We need more than just engineers who can do drawings, '" says Wilkes. "Other degrees don't quite see the whole industrial picture, but this degree does. It's not just business and it's not just technical engineering. It's everything. That's what companies around here are looking for."

Industrial engineering is among the fastest-growing engineering disciplines in South Carolina, with the Pee Dee being the epicenter for some of the most rapid growth. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that Florence has the seventh-highest location quotient -- the concentration of an industry within a region compared to the nation -- of industrial engineers.

Members of FMU's first class have already reaped some of those benefits. Class members have had internships at Otis Elevator, Wyman Gordon, Honda of South Carolina Manufacturing, International Knife and Saw, and others. Saunders has already accepted a position as a process engineer with Wyman Gordon, and most of the rest of the class are mulling multiple offers.

"There's a lot of interest," says Saunders. "It's been great to see. It was a very good decision as far as I'm concerned."

For more information, contact Matt McColl, Francis Marion University's director of media relations at mmccoll@fmarion.edu, 843-661-1227 or 843-687-0186.

FRANCIS MARION RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING STAFF SERVICE



T. Lang Beaty, Linda Sullen, Sharolyn Robinson and Katherine Barnette pose with their awards after the Francis Marion University annual Staff Awards Luncheon.

Francis Marion University honored four employees with special awards at its annual Staff Awards Luncheon. T. Lang Beaty was the recipient of the John J. Kispert Leadership Award, and Katherine Barnette received the Marvin Lynch

Humanitarian Award. Linda Sullen and Sharolyn Robinson were named winners of the university's two Outstanding Staff awards.

Employees of FMU are responsible for nominating their colleagues for the staff awards. A special committee consisting of past award winners and representatives of the university's academic schools and colleges selects the final recipients.

Beaty, the recipient of the Kispert Award, is the university's assistant director of purchasing. He has been with FMU for 34 years. The Kispert award recognizes staff members who exhibit the drive, determination and initiative to embrace the mission of their departments and to inspire their colleagues with a higher standard of leadership than what is called for by the particular employee's position.

Barnette, who received the Lynch Award, is a digital and print media designer within FMU's University Communications Department. She has been with Francis Marion for five years. The Lynch Award recognizes a staff member who exhibits an unusual commitment to and care for his fellow man at both work and elsewhere.

Sullen is an accountant within the Payroll Department. She has been employed by FMU for 41 years. Robinson is a custodian and has been with the university for 11 years. Both Sullen and Robinson were cited for exemplary service and dedication to their jobs.

CLAFLIN STUDENTS DIGITIZE 30,000 IMAGES

Submitted by J. Craig Cotton, Director of Public Relations, Office of Communications and Marketing



From Left to Right: Eric Washington, Nikola Drobnjak, Taylor Shirley, Deepika Bogati and Cecil Williams. (Absent, Jacari Owens)

In a technically challenging, \$50,000 film-to-digital project funded by the Gaylord Donnelley Foundation, five Claflin University interns digitized 30,000 photographic negatives in a four-month period, January through April. The negatives, part of the Cecil Williams Photographic Archives at Claflin University, represent a small number of the estimated 250,000 images in the collection. Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley believed passionately that land, arts and collections reveal who we are as a people: past, present and future. Collections that are funded—accessible to the public and creatively interpreted—urge us to consider where we have been, where we are now and where our next steps might take us.

The students included Deepika Bogati from Nepal, MBA graduate; Nikola Drobnjak from Serbia, 2017 business administration graduate; Jacari Owens from Greenville, management junior; Taylor Shirley from Hartsville, 2017 management graduate; and Eric Washington from Kingstree, 2017 English graduate. In a newly established lab,

located in the H.V. Manning Library, the digitization of negative films began in October 2015. However, the student interns began working in the first month of the year. Recently, Dr. Henry N. Tisdale, President of Claflin University, appointed Cecil Williams director of Historic Preservation. Working collaboratively with the student interns and Williams in the project are Marilyn Gibbs Drayton, library director and Barbara Green, library specialist.

The noble subjects and pioneers captured in the Cecil Williams Collection include individuals who emerged and were engaged in unforgettable waves of change that impacted the world like no other period in history: 1950 through 1996, when film was mostly replaced by digital technology.

Williams' negatives may comprise the largest collection of civil rights images in the world. The magnitude of the imaging project at Claflin is that it not only guarantees the preservation of the University's legacy, but it also establishes Claflin as a leading repository of images that encapsulate a pivotal period in American history. As the first historically black college/university (HBCU) in the state, Claflin has made immeasurable contributions not only to the Orangeburg community, but also to the state and the nation. Claflin's history is inextricably linked to the history of African Americans, higher education, the church, the civil rights movement and other issues of social justice. Eventually, after the digitization procedures, the entire Cecil Williams film negative Collection will be housed at Claflin University.

The digitization procedures undertaken by the student interns were performed with a device invented by Williams that allows film captures nearly 60 times faster than any other method. Williams' invention, the Film Toaster, came about in 2015.

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FALL CLASSES START AUGUST 21

AFFORDABLE TUITION • CAREER-FOCUSED PROGRAMS

MARION COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT FOCUSES ON EARLY LEARNERS

Submitted by Dr. Kandace Bethea, Interim Superintendent



Dr. Kandace Bethea

Recognizing the need to strengthen the academic foundation for our youngest learners, the district will consolidate the pre-kindergarten programs, those classes that house the four year olds, to the new Academy of Early Learning to be located at what is now the Mullins Early Childhood Center.

Under the direction of Stacy Wilbanks, the new Academy will house nine traditional 4K classes, two Montessori classrooms and three pre-school or 3K programs for students with disabilities. “We realize the deficits we see in our students start early,” explains Wilbanks. “Our intent is to address the achievement gap before it becomes overwhelming.”

Research indicates, “The best early childhood teacher should receive intensive supervision and coaching and should be involved in a continuous improvement process for teaching and learning” (Barrett, 2008). Superintendent Dr. Kandace Bethea explains the program will be a learning center for both students and teachers. Parenting workshops will also be emphasized. “By centralizing the program and providing on-site leadership, we will be able to provide consistency in delivery of training and in providing resources,” said Bethea. She went on to explain that many of the district’s youngest learners come to the 4K program with literacy, oral language and social emotional deficits. Professional development funded through the 4K Block Grant from the state of South Carolina will address these needs by providing teachers training to address poverty, behavior and literacy. During the summer the early childhood building located in Mullins will undergo

a few minor cosmetic changes and classroom technological upgrades, such as interactive white boards and multi-touch computer tables.



Stacy Wilbanks reading to Pre-Kindergarten students.

The two Montessori classrooms will be multi-aged, housing four and five year olds. The Montessori Method is a child-centered educational approach that values the development of the whole child, taking into account his or her physical, social, emotional and cognitive learning processes.

The classroom has self-directed activities, hands-on learning and collaborative play. In Montessori classrooms, the teacher offers age-appropriate activities to guide students in the process of making creative choices in their learning. The purpose is to help the child develop foundations for a lifetime of creative learning, to develop basic ideas, attitude and skills essential for success in school and in life. The traditional 4K classrooms will use the Opening the World of Learning (OWL) literacy curriculum. The 3K classrooms will be driven by the needs of the students through their Individualized Educational Plan developed by a team of educators through the Special Education department. “We are very excited about moving forward with this plan,” Wilbanks explains. “I know we will be making a positive impact on the learning of our youngest students.” This is just one of four new initiatives the district will be implementing during the 2017-2018 academic year.



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

Marion County School District's 2017-2018 Initiatives

- ⇒ The Academy of Early Learning: A renewed commitment to enhancing the education of pre-kindergarten students
- ⇒ The Leader in Me: A school transformation pilot program at Marion Intermediate School creating a culture of student empowerment
- ⇒ Early College Program: A partnership with Florence-Darlington Technical School giving students the opportunity to earn college credit during high school
- ⇒ STEM concentration: A heavy concentration on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) activities at Britton's Neck Elementary and Creek Bridge Middle/High School

www.marion.k12.sc.us



#WeAreMarionCounty

#EducatePrepareInspire

DISTRICT HONORS THREE FOR GOING BEYOND

Submitted by Deborah D. Wimberly, Office of Public Relations and Special Projects



MARION— Sandra Coombs, Patricia Owens and Shayla Smith were awarded the “We Are Marion County” Award at the May Board of Education Meeting for going above and beyond their regular responsibilities. “Every organization has people that give that extra effort to be sure things flow smoothly, goals are reached, and people feel valued,” explains Superintendent Dr. Kandace Bethea. “We are very proud

of these three individuals, for they honor the intent of the award.”



Pictured: Dr. Sam Whack, Levant Davis, Sandra Coombs, Cynthia Legette

Sandra Coombs is totally immersed in the lives and activities of the students at Palmetto Middle School. Working far beyond the responsibilities of a career facilitator, Coombs plans, organizes and decorates a variety of student events making it a memorable time for all

involved. Coombs attends afterschool sporting events and other activities of student interest. When Hurricane Matthew hit, she nearly took up residence at Palmetto Middle School when it was turned into a shelter, and she tirelessly worked to meet the needs for those who lost so much. Her efforts continued when the shelter moved to another location. Students look to her for counsel when times become challenging in the classroom and in their personal lives. Coombs serves on the school Leadership Team, Crisis Team and the Strategic Planning Team at both the school and the district level. She has been described as “the consummate professional and ultimate team player.”

“Mrs. Coombs is the embodiment of the ‘We Are Marion County Award,’” states PMS Principal Dr. Sam Whack. “I’m honored to make this recommendation for an individual so is so deserving.”



Pictured: Darrell Jameson, Patricia Owens, Levant Davis, Cynthia Legette

If you walk through a school building, and your mouth begins to water because of the aromas wafting through the halls, then you must be in the Academy for Careers & Technology. Described as a natural encourager, Patricia Owens instills in her

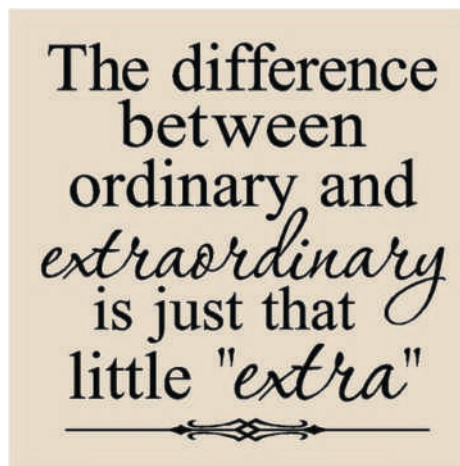
students not just the skills of cooking and baking but the love of flavors and presentation. Often contracted to serve community events, Owens will employ her students to prepare and serve, providing them with lessons beyond the classroom and a little change for their pocket. It is not uncommon for Owens to spring for ingredients for a particular dish just because her students showed an interest in a food or process. “I have seen confidence of students soar under her leadership,” comments ACT Director Darrell Jameson. “Cooking is her passion and the students realize that and it becomes theirs too.”



Pictured: Shalah Sweeney, Shayla Smith, Levant Davis, Cynthia Legette

In the early morning hours, Curriculum Facilitator Shayla Smith is opening the doors of Easterling Primary School to get an early jump on the day. Described as an individual who embraces every component of the “We Are Marion County” Award criteria, Smith inspires and impacts

everyone she comes in contact with during the day. “She builds meaningful relationships with all of our teachers, building their



confidence daily, so they can be successful in their classroom,” tells Principal Shalah Sweeney. Sweeney went on to portray Smith as a professional, a problem-solver, an innovator, and a dynamic member of the EPS family. Tirelessly working to meet the needs of the teachers and students, she lifts spirits through a kind note, a token of

appreciation or an encouraging word, and when Hurricane Matthew hit, she sought out contributions from as far away as Kentucky. By way of example she teaches others to strive for excellence, respect each other, wear a smile, have faith and to remember that the storms of life can often produce beautiful rainbows and new growth.

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Deborah D. Wimberly at 843-423-1811 ext. 1020 or email at dwimberly@marion.k12.sc.us.



DCIS STUDENTS GET BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT WALMART

Submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist



Students from DCIS gather outside Walmart of Darlington for a photo with Kevin Lane, store manager and Dr. Zenobia Edwards, director of DCIS. The students visited Walmart as part of an educational workshop.



Students from DCIS tour Walmart of Darlington with Kevin Lane, store manager.

DARLINGTON— Students at the Darlington County Intervention School (DCIS) got to chance to go on a behind-the-scenes trip to Walmart recently.

Dr. Zenobia Edwards, director of DCIS, said the school took a group of students to the store as an educational experience.

“The students got a chance to see how the company works, what the manager looks for in employees and some of the associated benefits of being a Walmart employee,” Edwards said.

Kevin Lane, store manager for the Darlington Walmart, led the student workshop before giving the students a storewide tour. The group met with departmental managers and explored how the business operates.



DCIS students met recently with Kevin Lane, store manager for Walmart of Darlington. The meeting was part of an educational workshop for the students to get a behind-the-scenes look at how the business operates.

The experience aligned with goals at DCIS to provide students with real-world experiences and skills necessary to obtain employment or continue education after high school.

After the trip, she said several students submitted applications for employment.



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<p>Hartsville, SC (843) 383-4891</p>	<p>Florence SC (843) 292-0862</p>	<p>Florence, SC (843) 664-2020</p>	
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THE VISIONARY PROPELLING THE CITY TOWARDS EXCELLENCE

by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Scotty Davis

Years ago, Florence was in dire need of a restoration of the public's trust. Specifically, the city was missing great customer service as a true, basic right that all citizens were susceptible to and would receive. In addition, the city needed to rebuild its brand as a community that had previously not been as diverse and unified as it is now. Thankfully, along came a remarkable leader with a forward-thinking mindset, a leader who would work for the public and who would push others to getting the city to the level it's on today.

"Government does not often analyze itself unless it is forced to." Those were the words of Scotty Davis, the director of General Services for the City of Florence, the leader I was honored to interview for the cover story of this issue of Diversity Works Magazine©. Davis has been working diligently for years to get all levels of the city to work collaboratively to develop and retain citizen satisfaction. This helps restore trust in government and brings about change that is much needed in the community. And this is what Davis has been doing and is currently doing in Florence: rebuilding and rebranding because the city has not always been the attractive tourist site that it has been becoming in more recent years.

Davis has always believed in working. In his hometown of Winnsboro, while in high school, he played a saxophone and worked at Winn Dixie and even drove the bus. He got his strong work ethic from his parents and grandparents who also believed in the importance of education. He also grew up debating with his father about various political topics as his father worked in government and often had meetings at their home. Even when political times got rough and opposition did things like knock down his campaign signs, his father remained calm and didn't say a word. Instead, he opted to simply put the signs back up. Regardless of others trying to influence his votes, his father's choices would always remain the same. Those events taught Davis the importance of embodying integrity and remaining firm as a leader.

Although he once wanted to be as far away from any field his father worked in as a child, Davis eventually followed his footsteps without realizing it until after the fact. Like his father, Davis has been a proactive leader with a commitment to excellence, and he has done so with integrity, confidence, courage, and respect, even when faced with adversity. He'd always simply wanted to make a name for himself, which is exactly what he has done here in the area.

Going to college in South Carolina near close relatives and friends would have been a very easy choice for Davis, but he chose to go off to school in North Carolina instead. While in college at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte (UNCC), he worked in the library and later as a private investigator. He also worked as an out-patient therapist for Charter Pines. He was interested in becoming an attorney, so he majored in political science and minored in criminal justice. He attended Campbell University School of Law and went back to UNCC, where he worked towards earning a Master of Public Administration.

The amazing part of his journey is that Davis never quite had his sights on moving to Florence. He became a part of the community when Kimberly Turner, his then fiancée and kindergarten sweetheart, got a position here--the woman whose kindergarten teacher had told him he'd one day be married to. When Davis found that the city of Florence had a job opening, which he applied for, it was in August of 1997. And since October '97, the two have been happily married and are now the proud parents of two sons, Justin and

Evan. But who would know that today Davis is a deacon who enjoys activities like fishing, racing cars and riding on dirt bikes?

Still, there's more to Scotty Davis than a humble heart and endless love for his family. He also has a strong belief in the oneness of the community. With over 20 years of senior local government management experience, Davis has been directly involved in all facets of our local government, including but not limited to the following: regional planning; engineering; strategic planning; economic/community development and historic preservation; financial management; and personnel recruitment.

Although he has worked in several sides of government, it has only been here. Davis has turned down several opportunities to work in other local governments but has decided to stay in Florence. "Florence is home. We're building something here! Not in New York, L.A., or Paris, but in Florence." And if someone were to compare our town to others, his response would be simple: "Dollar for dollar... we're as good as any and better than most."

Today Davis manages Human Resources, Community Services, and Legal Services. He feels blessed to have the skills and talents he has been able to use to help propel the community forward. Yet, he feels that he can do much more. Davis' standards for himself are very high because he has always been self-motivated. Overall, because Davis is a visionary who looks ahead into the future, he operates with the idea of "making Florence the premier place to live, work and play." And he ensures that all members of the city government adhere to that principle by creating and upholding an image of excellence, which goes from the answering of phones with the highest levels of customer service, to actively seeking the best, most diverse candidates for job openings. Davis knows that different experiences and different ideas can bring greatness to the city. Therefore, it's also important that he remains frank with his staff, all the while giving them the resources and tools they need to do their jobs correctly.



With that in mind, Davis knows that as a leader you have to also be responsible for what your employees do. Therefore, he acts as the guiding force of the train known as the City of Florence. If his employees, who have been trained and groomed under his leadership, were to do anything wrong, he takes full responsibility for their actions. "I take it personal when my employees fail. I look internal and try to figure out what I did wrong and how I can ensure that it doesn't happen again." But on the other hand, when city employees get things right, they alone get all the glory. Those ideals

prove that Davis is an exceptional leader who believes in his people and believes in placing accountability where it belongs.

Still, not only does Davis survey his employees, but he has also performed annual self-evaluations on himself, carefully analyzing citywide goals as well as accomplishments related to everything from housing and community development to code enforcement and human resources. It's all about providing that excellence of customer service to the Florence community.

Because of leaders such as Davis, citizens are given a voice, and all members of the government come together, speaking from that same progressive community voice. With that in mind, he concluded, "History will show that we're now in a glorious Renaissance period in Florence. Buckle up and enjoy the ride!"

Appreciating Our Parks, Recreation & Tourism

DRIGGERS ENCOURAGES GETTING YOUR PLAY ON

by Les Echols



Laura Driggers

The month of July is National Parks and Recreation Month, and it is celebrated across the United States. This July you can discover the power of play and adventure. For children and adults, play is a vital part of our well-being, physical health and personal interactions. During the month, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) challenges everyone to “Get Their Play On” with their local parks and recreation.

The theme this year, “Get Your Play On,” encourages everyone young and old to go out and do just that – play. You can go to a camp, discover a nature walk, sit on a blanket and play cards, join an exercise class or learn something new – you should just do it.

Laura Driggers is the programs superintendent and center manager at the Leatherman Senior Center. Her passion for recreation was evident early, as Driggers graduated from East Carolina University in 1989 with a degree in leisure system studies (recreation) and as a business minor. “I interned in recreation for Marriott hotels and worked with them for several years. I also worked for Rome/Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority in Rome, Ga. before moving to South Carolina. I worked several years as the resident services manager at the United Methodist Manor of the Pee Dee, and then I worked as the Director of Christian Education at Highland Park United Methodist Church,” said Driggers. In October 2006, she began working for Florence County Parks and Recreation. She has recently been relocated to the Leatherman Senior

Center, along with her assistant, Brenda Brown.

Since being at the Leatherman Senior Center, Driggers has seen several computer classes through the Florence County IT department. These classes have included: how to use your smartphone/ tablet; general



Leatherman Senior Center



The mission of the Florence County Parks and Recreation Department is to enhance quality of life for all residents of Florence County through programs and facilities that complement the diverse and progressive nature of our community.

terminology; social media; and how to use it and a class on your printer. They have also added several special classes and had an art show with colorings and crocheted items from classes already at the center. “We have added back the Friday Popcorn and Movie fun and are looking forward

to celebrating in July with an intergenerational movie where the senior adults can bring their grandchildren or a neighborhood child and enjoy a movie and popcorn together. We are starting a drama group for the senior adults and a walking club is on the horizon,” concluded Driggers.

Through Parks and Recreation, Driggers has seen the world and a lot of South Carolina. She espouses that her main job with Florence

County Parks and Recreation has been and is still “Senior Adult travel.” Driggers has three children – David (22), Leigh Anna (20) and Clark (15).

“Recreation is good for everyone – mentally and physically,” continued Driggers. “We challenge people to get out to a park

and enjoy the view and the weather. Recreation is good in that you can do it alone, with a partner, with your children or in a group – it doesn’t matter just ‘get out and play.’ We need to encourage our children to just play, and we hope to see them in a park, a center or at an event,” concluded Driggers.



IYANA’S PLAYGROUND

Submitted by Pee Dee Coalition



Pee Dee Coalition joins with family and friends to create a playground in Iyana Lowery’s memory.

Eight-year-old Iyana Lowery loved to play outdoors, and she especially loved going to the local playground.

Thanks to a shared vision of friends, family and Pee Dee Coalition (PDC), the young homicide victim and her mother will be memorialized with a new playground for residents of New Beginnings Transitional Shelter in Marlboro County near Cheraw.

“I’m happy and honored,” said Patty Brown, Iyana’s Aunt. “This is something Iyana would love because she loved playing in the playground. We’re hurting extremely bad. It’s something you never quit thinking about. It’s the emptiness inside your heart. Iyana was a sweet, innocent free-spirited child.”

As Delores Lowery, Iyana’s grandmother, sat on her porch with tears welling in her eyes, she said, “Iyana loved the outdoors and going to the park so much. It was a tragedy, but now Iyana has a park. No one can say

to her, ‘It’s time to go.’ She was such a sweet little girl. I feel wonderful. I feel honored. I love PDC so much. Iyana is walking around with her mother in heaven smiling and saying, ‘I have a park.’”

According to Janice M. Hamlin, New Beginnings Shelter services coordinator, “No one has a crystal ball as to why people do what they do. All we can do is offer support services for victims and families. We just want to honor this innocent child and give some solace to the family. Like the entire community, we are heartbroken. This is the sort of tragedy we at PDC are trying to prevent through our services. But we can’t do it alone. We need support from our community.”

Pee Dee Coalitions’ New Beginnings Transitional Shelter is a fully staffed center offering transitional shelter and skills development training leading to independent living for abused women and their children.

Tax-deductible contributions for Iyana’s Playground, can be made online at www.peedeecoalition.org/donate or mailed to Pee Dee Coalition, P.O. Box 1351, Florence, SC 29503-1351.

Pee Dee Coalition is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated

to the reduction of sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse and to serving the needs of victims. Pee Dee Coalition is supported in part by United Way.



Appreciating Our Parks, Recreation & Tourism

CITY OF FLORENCE "OWLS PROGRAM TAKES FLIGHT"

Submitted by Sharon Webb, P/T Activity Instructor, City of Florence



The City of Florence is well known for its established senior adult programs at Levy and Northwest Community Centers. In November 2015 the Recreation Department expanded programming to include a group for active adults 50 and better, based out of the Barnes Street Activity Center near Downtown Florence. The positive aging program commonly referred to as the OWLS (Older Wiser Livelier Seniors) enjoys activities Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

OWLS visit the Barnes Street Activity Center to use the gym and to take classes in Pilates, yoga and Zumba. In her 18 months as the OWLS yoga instructor, Dawn Marie Versylus has seen her students grow in their focus on balance, breathing and flexibility. OWLS members Karen Collins indicated that attending twice weekly yoga has taught her to notice her breathing and movement and Ava Grooms added she's learned to listen to her body.

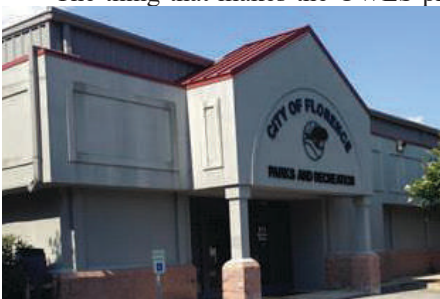
The latest craze in the OWLS program is the sport of Pickleball which was introduced to the City when Recreation Manager, Darlene Buchanan visited the South Carolina Senior Sports Classic at Francis Marion University in the spring of 2015. As she approached the Smith



"Members of the OWLS at an outdoor yoga session at the James Allen Plaza in Downtown Florence"

Center on campus, she heard an unusual sound coming from the vicinity of the tennis courts. Upon further investigation, she discovered dozens of seniors engaged in an activity using an oversized paddle, whiffle-type ball and playing on a court that was smaller in dimension than the larger tennis courts around it. Buchanan stated that she discussed bringing the sport to Florence in the weekly Recreation Supervisors meeting and Rob Hill, Director of Tennis, was tapped to explore the idea. As luck would have it, newcomers Debbie and her husband Dick "Spinny" Spinazzola had recently visited the Tennis Center and had mentioned to Hill the game of Pickleball during their visit. Hill reached out to them about the idea. The Spinazzola's were very interested in starting a program in Florence and began putting together ideas on how to make it happen. With what began as a happenstance has since turned into one of the fastest growing sports in the area. Each week, new faces join the program. The soon to be completed Pearl Moore Gymnasium at the Barnes Street Campus will yield more courts to accommodate the ever growing group.

The thing that makes the OWLS program so unique is that its members come from a broad and diverse spectrum of the community. From the empty nesters and those still in the work force to those recently retired or who have newly relocated to Florence looking to get involved with new friends and new activities. Having members who are used to



Barnes Street Activity Center



Pickleballers who play regularly at the Barnes Street Activity Center and at Timrod Park.

living a full life, the OWLS program offers specialty classes taught by local experts; this summer a mini session of four ceramic classes will offer fall holiday items plus the iconic Christmas tree many of the OWLS had in their childhood homes! Day trips several times a month include some of the best South Carolina has to offer to places both in our backyard, such as Pearl Fryar's topiary garden in Bishopville; the Florence County Museum; the McKissick Museum and McCutcheon House on the campus at USC; to various shows at Myrtle Beach and even a riverboat ride down the intracoastal waterway.

Because OWLS are always eager to improve themselves, safe driver classes are offered in conjunction with AARP at the Barnes Street Activity Center and cooking classes are hosted by Tracks Café at Hope Health's new campus. The computer lab is home to classes for beginners several times a year; more casual 'Tech Talks' are hosted weekly to provide one on one solutions to ever changing technology issues. In these informal sessions, local computer experts allow seniors to bring their smart phones and tablets to class and each is shown how to use these devices efficiently. Though primarily a daytime program, events are available for night OWLS including local theater and baseball.

Membership to the OWLS program is \$12 a year and includes use of the Barnes Street Activity Center gym which purchased all new equipment in 2015. Many classes are included in the fee (Pilates, yoga, Zumba, Lunch and Learns) and a strong effort is made to keep day trips free or at a minimal cost to participants.

Interested parties should call the City of Florence Recreation Department at 843.665.3253.

Barnes Street Activity Center
513 Barnes Street
Florence SC 29501
843 665 3253

"Like" us on Facebook at "City of Florence OWLS"



Appreciating Our Parks, Recreation & Tourism

PADDLE THROUGH TIME

Submitted by Florence Convention and Visitors Bureau



Paddle Boarding at Lynches River

Whether it's a couple or a large group of people ready for an excursion that can travel back through time, the South Carolina Revolutionary Rivers Trail offers fun for the beginner as well as the experienced paddlers.

The SC Revolutionary Rivers Trail follows the Lynches Scenic River from Lynches River County Park to the cypress

and tupelo-laden stomping grounds of celebrated Revolutionary War hero Brigadier General Francis Marion. The fact Marion and his band of militia simply could be chased for a marathon of miles by British cavalryman Banastre Tarleton and disappear into the cypress swamplands earned him the name of the Swamp Fox.

The 66-mile nature-based tourism trail offers paddlers a unique experience of floating through swampland that was once traversed by Patriots engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Loyalists. The trail also features a series of short excursions and overnight rustic camping opportunities.

The Lynches River meanders through a wide flood plain as it flows across the Coastal Plain of South Carolina. Although it's a flatwater river, the Lynches River has a zippy current, and beginning paddlers are encouraged to navigate the river with an experienced guide. The lower end of the river is physically and mentally challenging and better suited for those who can safely maneuver in river currents and meandering channels that contain fallen trees and logs.

While out on the river, there's plenty to take in – from the flora and fauna (look for the water hyacinth and water primrose) to the peacefulness of being on the river. The river supports many mammal species such as

river otters and beavers. Most of the land adjacent to the river is privately owned and maintained as parcels of contiguous flood-plain forest, which results in less fragmentation and improved wildlife habitat. Common sights include the wood ducks that inhabit the area year-round as well as warblers, great blue herons, and great egrets.

Enjoy paddling through history.

There are several excursions to choose from if you're interested in paddling with outfitters and guides. Among them are trips from Venter's Landing to Snow's Lake; an overnight weekend trip near Pamplico; Indigo Landing gatherings; Persimmon's Bluff to Snow's Lake; and an overnight near Johnsonville.

Before heading out, call these outfitters and guides for excursion reservations:

RiverRat's Canoe Rentals
2740 Indigo Landing Road, Scranton
843-389-4656; 843-601-1795
heatherfpape@yahoo.com
riverratc.com

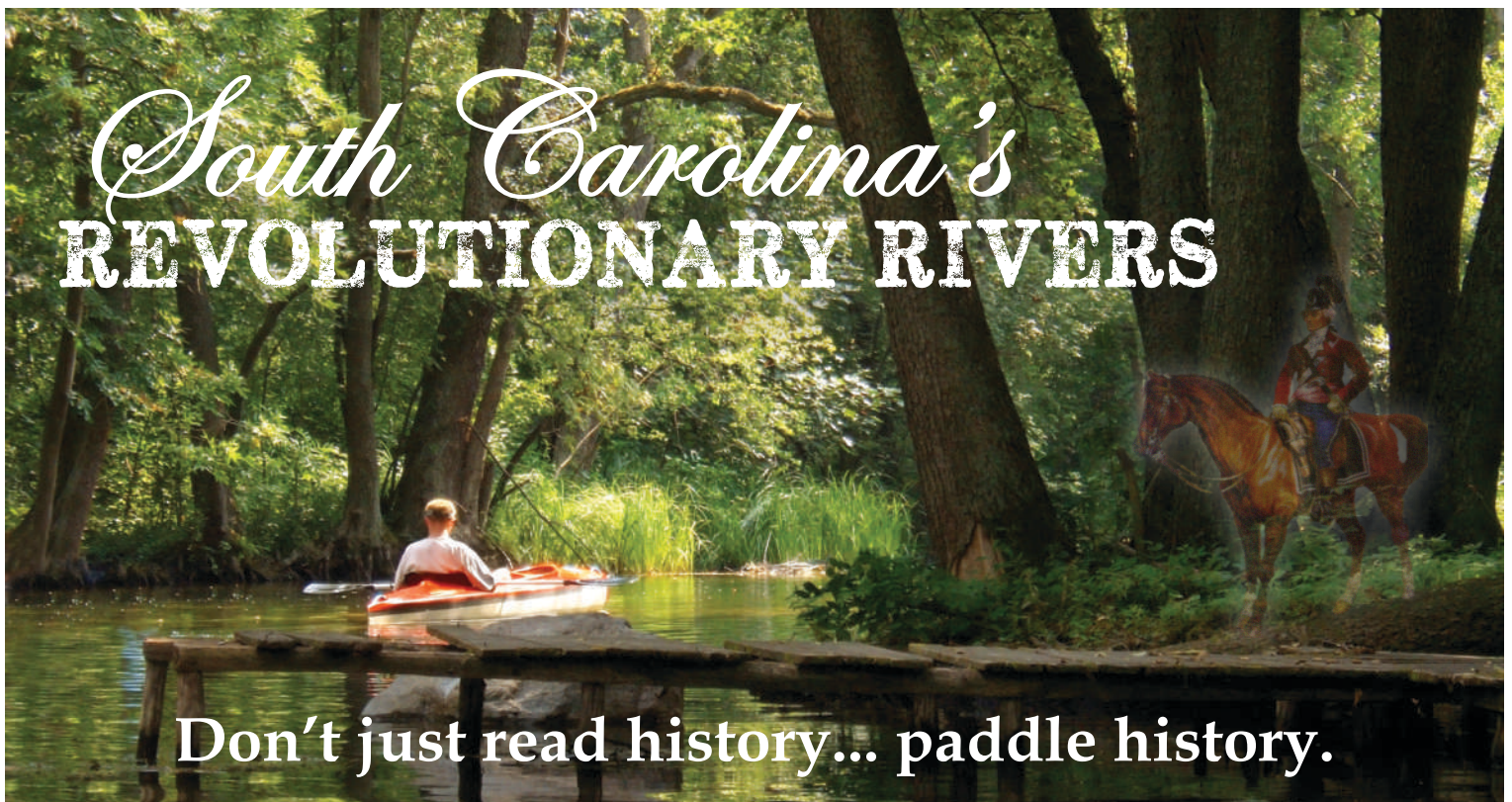
Swamp Fox Canoe Rentals
Johnsonville
843-625-0643
TerryHCCook@yahoo.com
swampfoxkayak.com
fb.com/swamp.fox.kayaking.and.rentals

Swamp Fox Adventures
P.O. Box 549 Scranton, 29591
843-598-9447

dpaulshaw@gmail.com
fb.com/SwampFoxAdventures

Lynches River County Park
5094 County Park Rd., Coward
34.038436, -79.789238
843-389-0550
Park open daily 9 a.m.-sunset
lynchesriverpark.com

Naturally Outdoors
2519 W. Palmetto St., Florence
843-665-1551
Mon-Fri, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.;
Sat, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
naturallyoutdoors.com



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South Carolina
Just right.

Appreciating Our Parks, Recreation & Tourism

SUMMER IN DARLINGTON

Submitted by Lisa Chalian-Rock, Planning Director

The kids are out of school, and the question becomes, "What to do?" In the City of Darlington, there are a variety of activities and events for young and old alike to enjoy.

Explore the outdoors. Take a hike and bird watch through **Williamson Park**, a 70-acre woodland preserve just a few blocks from downtown. Home to more than 300 species of flora and fauna, Williamson Park serves as home sweet home to Barred Owls, Red Shouldered Hawks, and Pileated woodpeckers, along with many others, and is an ideal bird watching venue. Abundant seed- and nectar-producing plants provide a great refueling station for birds passing through the area. The trails are a mix of natural paths and wooden boardwalks crossing Swift Creek. For more information, visit www.williamsonpark.org.

Go swimming. What's summer without at least one afternoon by the pool? The Darlington City Pool is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. for just \$1 per day. Members at the Darlington Family YMCA and Darlington Country Club also have poolside options. Darlington Area Recreation also offers swimming lessons by appointment.

Curl up with a good book. Head to the Darlington Library at 204 N. Main St. to catch up on your summer reading. You'll find the usual books, magazines, and newspapers, but you also can register to download e-Books at home if you prefer tech to paperbacks.

Practice your favorite sports. Darlington Area Recreation has a host of camps, including basketball and football as well as a summer basketball league, ongoing at both of the city's gyms. You can check into karate, boxing and summer dance classes with Patsy Hathcock too. Call 843-398-4030 for details.

Go treasure hunting! Darlington offers several antiques outlets for those who love to search for buried treasures. Dig through more than 20,000 square feet of furniture, handmade rugs and other collectibles at **Scarlett's Antiques** at 500 E. Broad St., housed inside an old tobacco warehouse where the crop was once dried, packed and sold. Then, stop by the historic downtown and see an extensive collection of custom, handmade fine jewelry, silverware and silver plates as well as many other antique items, including furniture and artwork at **The Jewelers Bench** at 60 Public Square. Around the corner, **All Star Sports Cards Plus** at 114 Cashua St. has a collectible (or two) for you no matter what your favorite sport. Come explore the rich history of the region at the **Darlington County Historical Commission**, housed in the old county jail. Head to **B&B Variety & Antiques** at 703 Pearl St. to search two buildings full of antique and modern collectibles. In the shadow of the **Track Too Tough To Tame**, the **Darlington Raceway Stock Car Museum** houses a large collection of stock cars, including those driven to victory by Richard Petty, Bill Elliott, David Pearson and others. Admission is \$5 for adults and free for children ages 12 and younger.

Hit the Market. **The Market on Darlington Square** has vendors, live music, food and special events on the first Saturday of the month, May through October from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Special events include the fun and games in August, a children's sidewalk chalk art contest in September, and the Showdown at the Square Chili Cook-Off in October.

Day-trip. Ride with Darlington Area Recreation on a variety of day-trips to make new friends, eat at iconic restaurants and visit attractions around the Pee Dee region, Midlands and Charleston area. Call 843-398-4030 for registration and details.

Visit www.darlingtonSConline.com for the latest Calendar of Events, or follow the City of Darlington on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DarlingtonSC.

williamsonpark.org

Become One with Nature

More than 300 Species of Plants and Animals

Williamson Park 5K Run/Walk September 16th

Learn and Explore 70 acres at Your Pace



South Carolina Just right. 
DiscoverSouthCarolina.com

www.DarlingtonSConline.com

Appreciating Our Parks, Recreation & Tourism

THE "GREEN BOOK OF SOUTH CAROLINA" LAUNCHES

Submitted by Tracie Broom, Co-Founding Partner, Flock and Rally: Integrated Communications for a Brave New South



COLUMBIA— The first-ever mobile travel guide to S.C. African American cultural sites, the Green Book of South Carolina, has been launched by the South Carolina African American Heritage Commission, offering residents and visitors from around the world a user-friendly guide to discovering

and celebrating enriching cultural experiences across the state at <http://www.GreenBookofSC.com>.

Research indicates that a majority of African Americans in the United States have ancestral connections to South Carolina, and the Green Book of S.C. provides a tool through which these roots can be appreciated and celebrated by diverse audiences across the nation and the world, offering access and exposure to the rich depth of the state's African American heritage.

More than 300 sites across S.C.

Designed with the mobile user in mind, this new international tourism tool has the fresh, user-friendly web interface of a travel app and features more than 300 heritage sites and cultural attractions across all 46 counties in South Carolina. The guide is designed with the mobile smartphone or tablet user in mind, but it is easy to find and utilize for laptop and desktop users too.

A User-Friendly Mobile Travel Guide

The Green Book of S.C. showcases points of interest for a diverse audience, allowing travelers to plan their ultimate, customized itineraries across South Carolina. Each entry includes a narrative defining the historic significance of the site, images and a link to directions and more. Users can browse destination listings via A to Z directory, on a "zoomable" map, or by using categories, including Historic Markers, Historic Churches (incl. brush arbors & praise houses), Historic Schools and HBCUs, Historic Districts & Sites, Historic Cemeteries, and Cultural Attractions. In order to be included in the Green Book of S.C., sites must be on the National Register or have a State Historic Marker.

A Game-Changer for S.C. Tourism

"With the 'Green Book of South Carolina' mobile travel guide, the S.C. African American Heritage Commission is introducing a game changer for cultural tourism to South Carolina," says S.C. Senator Vincent Sheheen, who championed the project. "This is one of the first statewide mobile travel guides to African American heritage and cultural destinations to be produced by a state anywhere in the U.S., and it is positioned to increase even further the \$2.4 billion annual economic impact of African American tourism in our state."

A Contemporary Homage

The Green Book of S.C. is a contemporary travel-planning tool that pays homage to the original "Green Book," first published in 1936 by New York City postman Victor Green as an African American travel guide to safe harbors and welcoming establishments across the United States. This contemporary homage features tourism destinations that impart a new Southern travel experience for all audiences, sharing the compelling story of African Americans in the Palmetto State.

Fulfilling the Commission's Mission

"The development of the mobile guide perfectly aligns with our organization's mission to identify and promote the preservation of historic sites, structures, buildings, and culture of the African American experience in South Carolina," says Jannie Harriot, vice chairperson of the S.C. African American Heritage Commission. "There has long

been a need for a travel tool like the Green Book of South Carolina."

The South Carolina African American Heritage Commission, an affiliate of the S.C. Department of Archives and History, works to increase the social, political and economic value of South Carolina African American heritage; encourage and demonstrate respect for all heritages; document and institutionalize African American heritage as an ongoing goal of preservation; and explore all areas of South Carolina for African American contributions. South Carolina is one of two states in the nation with an African American Heritage Commission. North Carolina is the other.

"The richness of South Carolina is related to the diversity of our citizenship, and it's incredibly important that we acknowledge the role that the African American community has played in the development of our state," says former S.C. Governor Jim Hodges, who established the Commission from its prior status as a council in 2001. "It's made South Carolina a richer place in terms of our culture, and it's made it a special place to live. The Green Book of S.C. mobile travel guide will enable visitors and residents to explore the rich history of S.C. in a convenient way."

Preserving, Protecting and Creating Economic Impact

"The Green Book of South Carolina helps expand tourism's impact in the Palmetto State, which is now a \$20.2 billion industry," notes Dawn Dawson-House, a member of the Commission, director of corporate communications at the S.C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and key adviser to the project. "We're inviting travelers to venture off of highways to explore sites along their travel routes, to amplify the economic impact for all of these African American heritage sites and the municipalities in which they are located, and to provide an immersive experience of S.C. African American culture."

Built with Family Reunions in Mind

The Green Book of S.C. mobile travel guide embraces the tradition of word-of-mouth recommendations and suggestions from friends and family. The guide is a particularly ideal tool for planning group outings and activities during family reunions, weddings or conventions, since event planners can use the guide's mapping function to search for significant African American heritage and cultural sites that surround a particular city or area.

Selected Green Book of S.C. attractions and the cities and tourism districts in which they are located:

1. Mann Simons Site, Columbia, S.C. – Capital City/Lake Murray Country
2. Historic Brattonsville, McConnells, S.C. – Olde English District (OED)
3. Bertha Lee Strickland Museum, Seneca, S.C. – Lake Hartwell Country
4. Southern African American Heritage Center, Cheraw, S.C. – Olde English District (OED)
5. Penn Center, St. Helena Island, S.C. – Lowcountry and Resort Islands
6. Atlantic Beach, S.C. – Grand Strand
7. Redcliffe Plantation, Beech Island, S.C. – Thoroughbred Country

View the entire Green Book of South Carolina mobile travel guide online and via mobile web browser at <http://www.greenbookofsc.com>. Users can add a shortcut with a branded Palmetto tree icon to their collection of apps on their mobile device home screens via the web browser "settings" interface.

"We've always known that the preserved and protected places in South Carolina that interpret African American history have particular appeal, especially for cultural travelers," notes Harriot. "We're happy that the Commission has been able to compile it all into a single source that makes it easier for people to find us, learn about us and experience us."

Appreciating Our Parks, Recreation & Tourism

ADVANCING TOURISM IN THE PEE DEE

by Ta' Meeka Epps



Fran Willis

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation and conservation. Its work draws national focus to the far-reaching impact of successes generated at the local level. National Park and Recreation Month is celebrated every July, and this year's theme is "Get Your Play On."

The Pee Dee Tourism Commission, located in the Farmers Market, is responsible for boasting the beautiful scenic views and

all that the Pee Dee region has to offer its residents and visitors. Tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world and the number one industry in South Carolina. In fact, the Pee Dee is one of the eleven regions in South Carolina designated as a tourism region. Through boasting, tourism of the Pee Dee Region, the organization is opening the area up to a billion dollar industry.

The Pee Dee Tourism Commission was created by Legislative Act in 1974. The purpose of this commission is to increase the economic impact of tourism in the Pee Dee Region. Under this act, the Pee Dee is comprised of Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Lee, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg counties. Each county is represented by four commissioners that are recommended by the legislative delegation and appointed by the governor. They serve for four years and are very important to the function of the Commission. The Commission is funded by a legislative act and depends on the individual counties for a portion of their Accommodation Taxes.

Fran Willis is the executive director of Pee Dee Tourism Commission and has served in this capacity for the past 31 years. She is responsible for the advertising and promotion of the region along with all other duties as director.

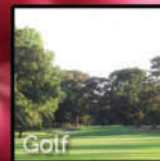
Pee Dee Country offers three beautiful state parks, natural areas and many local parks as well as four scenic rivers. The Pee Dee is a family friendly area, full of parks to "Get Your Play On," as well as museums and attractions that are great for children of all ages.

The Pee Dee Tourism Commission was located at the South Carolina Welcome Center in Dillon for the past six years. The relocation of the Commission back to the Pee Dee State Farmers Market will be an excellent opportunity to promote the Pee Dee to tourists and local residents alike. Pee Dee Tourism will be operating a Visitor Information Center and will be selling South Carolina Collectibles. It will offer a seating area and access to the Internet. Pee Dee Tourism welcomes the opportunity to not only enjoy the visitors to the Market but to also increase the number of visitors. Look for signage for the Pee Dee Tourism Commission on Interstate 95 as well as signage within the Market.

As the number one industry in the State of South Carolina, tourism generates over 12 billion dollars. It is also one of the largest employers in South Carolina. Tourism is important not only in the SC resort areas but also throughout the State. There are many places to visit and enjoy right here in the Pee Dee. Stop by and see Fran Willis and the Pee Dee Tourism Commission at the Farmers Market. They Have Plans For You.

Visit: www.peedeetourism.com or call at 843-669-0950 better yet give them a visit in the log cabin located inside the Pee Dee State Farmer's Market.

Let Us Get your play on in the Pee Dee ...a world of adventure!



PEE DEE TOURISM COMMISSION

NORTHEAST SOUTH CAROLINA ~ HOME OF THE PEE DEE RIVERS

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DARLINGTON • DILLON • FLORENCE • LEE • MARION • MARLBORO • WILLIAMSBURG COUNTIES

Now located at the Pee Dee Farmer's Market

Appreciating Our Artists

THE ARTS COMMUNITY CELEBRATES THE 2017 ARTS AWARDS

Submitted by Sandra Cook, Executive Director of FRAA

Annually, The Florence Regional Arts Alliance presents a series of awards recognizing the important contributions that individuals, groups and businesses make to the cultural life of our community. In addition, the efforts and hard work of students dedicated to the arts are celebrated through awards and scholarships. Nominations are solicited each spring from the community and awarded by the Florence Regional Arts Alliance's Board of Directors. The awards themselves are a work of art. Mr. Doug Gray was commissioned by the Florence Regional Arts Alliance's Awards committee to create the 2017 Arts Awards. The backdrop for the evening was music by Jenny Johnson, Margaret Jones and Cliff Gardner of the Lake City Woodwinds. Also, on display was visual artwork by Kira Dubose, and written work by Annie Abernathy, and a sound bite by saxophonist, Coleman Wright. All three are recipients of the Betty Ann Darby Scholarship Award. The 2017 Arts Awards Night was made possible by a generous donation by Edible Arrangements of Florence.

The following individuals were recognized through these awards at a reception held in their honor:



Board Member Allison Steadman, Laura Greenway, and President Michele Pridgen

Laura Greenway was awarded the John W. Baker Award. This Award recognizes an individual from Florence County who has significantly impacted the quality of life in our community through his/her activities, contributions and/or accomplishments in the arts. Laura Greenway has served Florence School District 1 since 1987 as the Performing Arts Coordinator and a music teacher. She has reached hundreds of Florence area students through the All-City Choral Concert, The High School Honors Choir, and most recently, District One's Vocal Star competition. Greenway has also been responsible for District One's Musically Exceptional (DOME) program since its inception in 1988. Greenway has served as the FSD1 representative on the Florence Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors for more than 15 years. She is also a substitute flautist with the FSO.

The Business & Partnership Award Recipient went to the Lake City Downtown Merchants Association. The Business and Arts Partnership Award recognizes a vital commitment to the arts as evidence by operational and/or project support provided on a substantial and ongoing basis. The Lake City Downtown Merchants Association is the collection of businesses that keeps Lake City's Main Street bustling and booming. These are the business venues that host the ArtFields® Competition artists. This is a year-round process that has allowed these businesses to engage with the artist throughout the year. ArtFields just recently celebrated its 50-year anniversary.

The Outstanding Arts Organization Recipient was awarded to the South Carolina Dance Theatre. This award is presented annually to the Florence County arts organization that has a tremendous impact on the community. This may be through programming, projects, resource development, advocacy or other innovation. The South Carolina Dance Theatre has worked for over 38 years to provide the area with an



President Michele Pridgen, SCDT Artistic Director Susan Rowe, and Board Member Allison Steadman



Board Member Allison Steadman, Kimberly Washburn, and President Michele Pridgen



President Michele Pridgen, past-President Keith Best, and Board Member Allison Steadman



Betty Ann Darby Scholarship Recipient, Coleman Wright

outstanding holiday and spring performance. The SC Dance provides the premier platform and training ground for ballet dancers in the region.

The Greg Fry Arts Educator Award Recipient went to Kimberly Washburn. Kimberly Washburn is the Curator of Education at the Florence County Museum. She creates dynamic, hands-on, educational programs for school groups as well as families. Through these educational experiences, Washburn works to foster relationships between the student, family, community, and the museum.

Keith Best was the Frank H. Crow Award Recipient. This award is presented annually to a Florence Regional Arts Alliance board member, staff member or volunteer who has had a tremendous impact on the organization's growth and success (either over the past year or a longer period of time). Best has served with the Florence Regional Arts Alliance as president and continues to serve as past president on the board of directors.

During the evening, Board members Murriel Calcutt and Kelly Jokisch presented the Florence Regional Arts Alliance and Honda of South Carolina's Betty Ann Darby Scholarship Awards. Betty Ann Darby Scholarships are merit scholarships awarded predominantly on the basis of demonstrated talent, passion for the arts and intention to pursue a career in an arts discipline or in arts education. The Program is named in honor of one of South Carolina's most distinguished music educators. A member of the South Carolina Music Educator's Hall of Fame, Darby served Florence Public School District One for 39 years as a much beloved and highly revered music administrator and music teacher. The scholarships are made possible by the generous support of Honda to the Florence Regional Arts Alliance. To be considered, a senior's primary residence must be in Florence County or he or she must be graduating from a Florence County public or private high school.

Among other high school activities, Wright has performed in marching band, symphonic band and jazz band. Wright is a member of Francis Marion University Community Concert Band, Coker College Community Concert Band and Florence Area Big Band. He plans to pursue a degree in music education and minor in saxophone performance

Appreciating Our Artists

THE ARTS COMMUNITY CELEBRATES THE 2017 ARTS AWARDS CONT'D



Betty Ann Darby Scholarship Recipient Annie Abernathy

at the University of South Carolina. Wright also received a scholarship as part of the University of South Carolina Saxophone Studio.

Annie Abernathy is graduating from Wilson High School. She has been accepted to University of Pittsburgh and Fordham University. She plans to major in art history. Abernathy said that she has been involved with visual arts and performing arts since childhood. During high school, she has been a member of the Mock Trial Team, Academic Challenge Team and Math Team. She held an internship with Florence County Museum's Curator of Collections and Interpretations. Abernathy hopes to continue her passion for art history by pursuing a career as a museum curator.



Betty Ann Darby Scholarship Recipient Kira Dubose

In the fall, Dubose plans to attend Brown University and Rhode Island School of Design's Dual Degree Program. This will allow her to pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Animation from RISD and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Brown. Dubose became interested in art and psychology during the Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America Summer Institute program. While there she conducted research on the relationships between mental illness and artistic ability. She wishes to continue studying these subjects and "envisions creating an animated series that addresses different mental illnesses because this is a topic that isn't adequately addressed in our society."



People's Choice Award, House of Hope by artists Joy Gowan and Jimmy Lee

Reynolds Williams of Play Me I'm Yours, Florence presented awards for the People's Choice award to House of Hope, artists Joy Gowan and Jimmy Lee. The Most Creative award went to East Clarendon Middle School art students, Charlotte Diggers, art teacher. Many were present to celebrate all these steadfast and significant contributions to the Arts within Florence County.



Most Creative Award, East Clarendon Middle School art students and art teacher, Charlotte Driggers

The Florence Regional Arts Alliance would like to thank the administration, staff and faculty of Florence County Public High Schools for helping us recognize and support the young artists in our community by presenting to them the Excellence in Arts Education Awards. These Awards are presented in conjunction with Honda Of South Carolina.

Students were nominated on the basis of their superior achievement as well as for their participation in school and community arts activities. It is our hope that such awards will encourage recipients to make their artistic pursuits a life-long endeavor.

Honda of South Carolina and the Florence Regional Arts Alliance were pleased to present the awards to the following recipients in their respective disciplines during each high school's awards ceremonies:

Hannah-Pampilco High School

Kimberly Meggs – Visual Art
Hunter Singletary – Chorus

Timmonsville High School

Naomi Bledsole – Visual Art

Johnsonville High School

Erica Gaster – Visual Art

West Florence High School

Coleman Wright – Band
Nicole Barber – Chorus
Tashie Burgess – Drama

Lake City High School

De'Shawn McFadden – Chorus
Marquis Cooper – Dance
Emily Haines – Drama

Wilson High School

Nicole Malin – Visual Art
Courtney Timmons – Chorus
Dylan Huang – Orchestra

South Florence High School

Kira Dubose - Visual Art
Gary Williams - Band
Ashley Miller – Chorus
Tyquan Jones – Dance
Miracle Alford-Williams – Drama

For more information about the Alliance's awards and scholarship program, please visit the Florence Regional Arts Alliance's website at www.florenceartsalliance.org or contact the director, Sandy Cook, at 843-407-3092 or by email director@florenceartsalliance.org.

"PEE DEE SAMPLER" TO HIGHLIGHT REGION'S ARTISTS AT FMU

Submitted by FMU



Jackie Wukela's "Walk Along the Ashley" will be one of the many works of art on display at Francis Marion University's Hyman Fine Arts Center this summer during the Pee Dee Sampler series, which began in May and will last until Aug. 10. The exhibits will be available for viewing from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Some of the Pee Dee's most renowned artists will have their works on display throughout the summer at the Francis Marion University Art Gallery Series.

The Pee Dee Sampler will include artists such as ceramicists Jane Crossman, Douglas Gray and Sasha Federer; painters Anna Coe, Matt Cook, Lynda English, John Lehum and Jackie Wukela; photographers Anna Baldwin, Dewey Ervin, and Donna Goodman; and the photography and acrylic paintings of

Tari Federer.

The Hyman Fine Arts Center – located on FMU's campus – will host the series, which began in May and will last until Aug. 10. The exhibits will be available for viewing from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Francis Marion Professor of Visual Arts Dr. Douglas Gray, one of the gallery's featured artists, says he attempts to conserve some the natural wonders that inspire him through his art.

"Much of my inspiration comes from observing and reflecting upon our everyday surroundings," Grey says. "The color of moss, the texture of bark, the sound of water, these are among the most common sights, sounds, and experiences. Yet, they still have the power to stop me in my tracks."

For more information on the FMU Art Gallery Series or future events held at the Hyman Fine Arts Center, call 843-661-1385.

Appreciating Our Artists

ARTFIELDS® NAMES 2017 COMPETITION WINNERS

Submitted by Taronda Barnes, ArtFields Program Director



"SPIRITUAL SECURITY - SAFE IN PRAYER"

LAKE CITY--Nine days of viewing, experiencing, creating and appreciating art hit its highest note at ArtFields® this year with the awarding of \$120,000 in prizes to the ArtFields® competition winners.

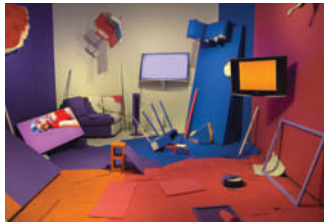
Chosen from votes by thousands of visitors and a panel of esteemed jurors:

- Alexi Torres of Atlanta, GA won the \$50,000 Top Prize for his piece titled, "SPIRITUAL SECURITY - SAFE IN PRAYER"

- Brittany Watkins of Tallahassee, FL won the \$25,000 Juried Panel Prize titled "<Accept [Self]+ Elsewhere]"

- Patricia Sabree of Bluffton, SC won the \$12,500 People's Choice (2D) Prize for her piece, "Heritage"

- Haley Ard of Pamplico, SC won the \$12,500 People's Choice (3D) Prize for her piece, "MADE-UP"



"Accept [Self]+ Elsewhere]"

The below artists were recognized for stellar work in their medium with a Category Prize of \$1,500 each:

- Mixed Media: Connie Lippert, Seneca, SC, "Achadh"

- Painting: Maggie Evans, Savannah, GA, "Plateau"

- Installation: Gardner Cole Miller, Palm Beach Garden, FL, "Archipelago"

- Sculpture: Heather Mae Erickson, Sylva, NC, "Perfect Imperfection Collection"

- Drawing: Jessica Burke, Statesboro, GA, "San Antonio Rose (The Bandit Queen)"

- Photography: Brant Barrett, Surfside Beach, SC, "Rooster Time"



"Heritage"

- Digital Media: Matt Bryant, Vance, AL, "Shift.smear"

Merit Prizes of \$1,000 each went to the following artists: Deighton Abrams, Seneca, "Winter Kept Us Warm/Shanty Shanty Shanty"; Natalie Daise, Georgetown, "She Rises I & II"; Kendell Garner, Anderson, "Grasp"; Lisa Humphreys, Atlanta, G.A., "Ringleader"; Dapper Bruce Lafitte, New Orleans, L.A., "A Blue Throw Down"; Kelly Oakes, Charlottesville, V.A., "Determined"; Kate Osmond, Murrells Inlet, "Granary"; Bow Smith, Charleston,



"MADE-UP"

"Curtains"; Janet Swigler, Columbia, "Room for Magic"; and Joseph Walton, New Orleans, L.A., "Spy Boy Ricky."

Seven states are represented in the cash prizes, and numerous of the winning pieces were shown in non-traditional spaces (i.e. not galleries).

ArtFields 2017 drew in top talent from the 12 eligible Southeastern states with the largest total cash prizes in the competition's five-year history. Announced during the ArtFields finale, the prizes were just one of the measures of the festival's success. The winning pieces will become part of a permanent collection in Lake City.

For top winners, past and present, the prize money translates to a life-changing opportunity. And for all accepted artists, showing their work alongside, and networking with, the Southeast's most talented was an experience they will return for again and again.

More than 22,000 visitors attend each year to view art and participate in dozens of special events, workshops, musical concerts and lectures, traveling from as far away as Seattle, W.A., and Santa Fe, N.M.

"At this point, ArtFields has delivered more than half a million dollars in prizes and thousands of dollars in sales for local merchants," said Taronda Barnes, program director. "We look forward to sharing this special experience with visitors and artists for years to come."

For information on sponsorship or participation opportunities, contact ArtFields at 843-374-0180 or info@artfieldssc.org. For more information on art activities, email info@artfieldssc.org.

About ArtFields®

ArtFields® is the recipient of the 2017 Southeast Tourism Society Award and The Charles A. Bundy Award. The competition began in 2013 with a simple goal: honor the artists of the Southeast with a week's worth of celebration and competition in the heart of a traditional, southern small town. With over \$120,000 up for grabs, awarded based on the input of visitors to ArtFields and a panel of judges comprised of acclaimed visual arts professionals, the competition offers life-changing amounts of money to all artists in all media who live in the 12 Southeastern states. The 400 pieces are displayed in locally-owned venues, from renovated warehouses from the 1920s to a Smithsonian-qualified art gallery to upscale restaurants and start-up boutiques in a mutual celebration of art and community. What was once one of South Carolina's most prosperous agricultural communities now becomes a living art gallery as it demonstrates the best of the Southeast and recognizes the incredible talent here. (Photo credit goes to Fred Salley)

KEEP DARLINGTON COUNTY BEAUTIFUL NAMES WINNERS

Submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist



Renee Howle (left) and Gary White (right), both with Keep Darlington County Beautiful, present t-shirts to Chloe Moore (left center) and Divya Patel (right center) after the two were named winners of the organization's annual art contest. The shirt on the left depicts Moore's first-place artwork.

DARLINGTON— Keep Darlington County Beautiful announced recently the two winners of its annual art contest. Chloe Moore of Hartsville Middle School earned first place, and Divya Patel of Hartsville High School took home second.

Renee Howle, an organizer with Keep Darlington County Beautiful, said the organization received more than 230 entries from 4K through 12th grade this year, more than she can recall ever receiving in the past. She said the two winners certainly deserved the recognition.

"Their artwork represented well our message to the community of being litter-free," she said. "We just appreciate Darlington County School

District, the art teachers and the students for participating. We hold this each year, and we look forward to working with everyone again next year." Students who choose to participate in the contest must create a piece of artwork using Palmetto Pride's colors of blue and green as well as the organization's slogan, which is "We all keep Darlington County clean in 2017." The contest hopes to promote to the community the importance of not littering.

Each year, Palmetto Pride funds the cost of gloves, vests, trash grabbers and trash bags when Keep Darlington County Beautiful participates in the Great American Cleanup throughout April, May and June. The organization printed the artwork of Moore and Patel on official t-shirts that will be distributed to volunteers participating in the Great American Cleanup. Additionally, Moore received a \$50 gift card, and Patel received a \$25 gift card.

For more information about Keep Darlington County Beautiful or to volunteer, please call 843-398-4800.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

BLUM ENCOURAGES ALL TO CELEBRATE HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

by Anna Bowman



In September 1968, Congress authorized President Lyndon B. Johnson to proclaim National Hispanic Heritage Week. During President Ronald Reagan's Administration, the observance was expanded in 1989 by Congress to a month-long celebration, Sept. 15 - Oct. 15. Today, according to the 2015 U.S. Census, estimates show that there are 54 million Hispanic people in the United States, comprising over 17 percent of the population. Hispanics or Latinos are the largest racial/ethnic minority population in the U.S., and includes people of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. About one in six people living in the U.S. Only Mexico has a larger Hispanic population.



Blanca Blum, RN

In the past decade, the Pee Dee area has embraced and celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month in area schools, as well as special events being held at the Florence County Library and Francis Marion University, alongside various local agencies and organizations in Florence and surrounding areas.

Hispanics in America have had a profound and positive influence through their strong commitment to family, faith, hard work, and service – the foundation of all Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity. Diversity Works Magazine© had an opportunity to talk one-on-one with Blanca Blum, a registered nurse with Carolinas Hospital System in Florence, about the pride, love and respect she has for her Hispanic Heritage.



"I was born and raised in Cali, Colombia. Cali, one of the three largest cities in Colombia, is known for its rich history of Salsa dancing and the production of sugar. What I love so much about my culture is the food, the music, but most importantly how close families are. I graduated from High School (Colegio Aleman Cali) and shortly after that moved to Florence, where I attended Francis Marion University for my degree in psychology, which I finished at Iowa State University. Eight years later, I decided to start my career in nursing."

Blum has lived in America for the last 16 years. Even though her parents, Jairo Ramirez and Fabiola Campuzano de Ramirez, continue to live in Armenia, Colombia, Blum loves knowing that she has dear family members in America as well. Her sister, Beatriz Hickson along with her husband, Jay Hickson and their children, Isabel and Joseph, reside in Michigan.

But more importantly, Blum recently celebrated her second wedding anniversary with her husband Kevin, a native of West Virginia, who is a radiologic technologist at McLeod.

Hispanic Heritage Month is an exciting time to engage others into her family's rich culture and traditions. "I believe that when



you are exposed to other cultures, this increases the degree of understanding, respect, and acceptance of others. This can enrich your life because it gives you a chance to learn about yourself as well as other ways of life."

Even though, Hispanic Heritage Month is still several months away, she knows exactly how she will celebrate the month-long event. "My husband and I plan on gathering with local Hispanics and sharing our favorite dishes from our countries. My favorite dish from Colombia is 'Bandeja Paisa,' a traditional dish from the Paisa region, consisting of white rice, red beans, ground beef, plantain, chorizo, chicharron, arepa, avocado and a fried egg."

Blum loves that in her culture Hispanics truly value family and tradition, and she envisions a bright future for the next generation of Hispanics in America because of all the wonderful opportunities available in this country for pursuing education and careers. In fact, Blum came to America to further her education. "When I moved to the United States I was seeking a career in international business," she said, "but my passion for helping people would eventually lead me to my true love – nursing."



"Becoming a nurse has been one of the most rewarding things in my life. Helping and educating others is indeed my passion and having a supporting family and co-workers (Tonda Spinks, Shelley Gandy, Tina Cusack, Gaye Lee, Mary Small, Debra Wise and Director Cheryl Dorriety), allow me to be a better person and provide the best care possible for my patients at Carolinas Hospital System."

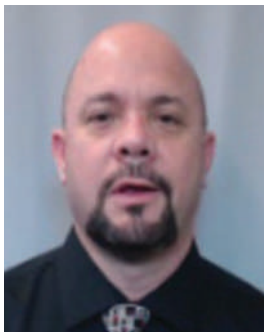
Blum would like to encourage everyone to take a moment this year to celebrate and/or participate in at least one event during Hispanic Heritage Month, in the hope that we will all learn to embrace all of the unique cultures and traditions that truly make us all an equal part in the landscape that "is" the United States of America.



Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

A BLESSING TO THE LATINO HEALTHCARE COMMUNITY

by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Gabriel Cardona

Hispanic Heritage Month holds a certain meaning for Gabriel Cardona. In his eyes, it's about "recognizing the contributions made and the important presence of Hispanic and Latino Americans in the U.S. and celebrating our heritage and culture." It also entails "sharing our profound and positive influences to the U.S. through our strong commitment to family, faith, hard work and service."

Originally a native of Medellin, Colombia, who has been in the U.S. since the late '80s, Cardona has a 15-year

background in business management. Cardona has managed several types of retail businesses in which he provided employment opportunities, assistance, and charity events as the businesses permitted.

"I've prayed for some time to acquire a change in my path where I could do a lot more for the Latino community and the community as a whole. The answer to those prayers came with a position as a CHW (Community Health Worker) with the Coastal Plain Rural Health Network (CPRHN) over eight years ago. I was able to coordinate a structure to increase and assure access to community-based primary healthcare services, specialty services, social services, and many other resources to Latino immigrant families in several counties in South Carolina but based primarily in Clarendon County and the Pee Dee region. I've remained in the same path for the eight plus years, where I acquired my last position at HopeHealth as the Latino Services Manager. Since then, I have been able to continue to coordinate that structure to increase and assure access to several community-based healthcare services, but in a much larger capacity." Cardona states, "It has been the biggest blessing" in his career.



perpetuates stigma; and it reduces the likelihood that individuals will seek health care, thereby making individuals continue to struggle with untreated, and possibly chronic, illnesses. In Cardona's position at HopeHealth, he practices diversity and inclusion in several ways:

- By understanding, accepting, and valuing differences between people
- By identifying different talent pools and learning from others' differences
- By finding and creating ways to connect with people, patients, and employees of different races, cultures, faiths, levels of education, and communities
- By promoting a respectful and friendly environment that increases the participation and contribution of all different employees
- It is an intentional, purposeful effort to ask, to include, and to seek opportunities to recognize people of various ideas and ideals.

While Cardona has members of the healthcare community looking up to him because of his contributions and efforts, he admires three historical figures for specific reasons:

- Alexander the Great because "he was one of the greatest military leaders of all time, and the greatest military commander who ever lived. He had the largest empire in the history, which stretched from Greece to Egypt to India."
- Martin Luther King Jr. because "he fought for racial equality and showed the people a picture of a better future where all men were equal. His courage, perseverance and the will to fight for what was right until the very end made him a great leader."
- George Washington because "he was a visionary, and he had immense vision for America which has led America to become the super power it is today. His tenacity, steadfastness and ability to make decisions during difficult times made him a great leader, and he led many people to success."

There are a few things that Cardona feels we as a people should begin doing immediately, including increasing cultural competency awareness and education; stopping the stereotyping, stigmatizing, and making of wrongful assumptions about others; and start taking the same approach of Martin Luther King Jr. of racial equality and that all people are equal, and we all belong to one human race.

Because of Cardona's ideals and D&I practices as a leader, not only will the Latino population in the area continue to benefit, but all others in the community will also.

Hispanic Americans:
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Being a blessing to others in the community comes easy for the services manager whose specific duties are: "to ensure the success of all programs and grants related to the Latino community; to coordinate, supervise, provide guidance and support to the four staff members of the team, including a Latino outreach specialist, a CHW, and two Spanish medical interpreters in Florence and Manning; to develop and maintain strategic partnerships in the Latino community; and to ensure the fulfillment of the company's mission that is a commitment to excellence through service that exemplifies love for people and passion for their well-being."

In his field, Cardona knows how important diversity and inclusion (D&I) practices are. According to him, "Healthcare staff can often be resistant to providing high quality healthcare services and access to care to uninsured and low health literacy Latinos. Often stereotyping, stigma, and wrongful assumptions occur. I've overcome those barriers by providing cultural competency education and training as often as necessary to healthcare staff and the community; by fighting for healthcare equality with courage, perseverance, and a very positive approach; and by providing statistical proof of positive outcomes as a result of our programs, executions and efforts that help prevent the increase of chronic conditions, hospital emergencies, and negative outcomes that cost a lot more money to taxpayers in the community."



SPC INNOVATES TO SERVICE FLORENCE, DARLINGTON AND MARLBORO

Submitted by SPC Credit Union



Did you know YOU can enjoy the benefits of SPC Credit Union if you live, work, or attend school in Darlington, Marlboro and Florence Counties?

SPC has come a long way from its humble beginnings in 1941 where, at the recommendation of James and

Charles Coker, 100 Sonoco Products Company employees met to discuss the establishment of a savings and loan association under the Federal Credit Union Act.

On December 6, 1941, James and Charles Coker saw their simple vision of providing a way for their employees to save money and purchase a home come to fruition. On that day Sonoco Employees Credit Union was born. At the time, the maximum number of shares for each member was set at 50 cents, the maximum loan for one member \$60 with security, maximum unsecured loan limit at \$30 per member, with an interest rate of one percent on the unpaid balance. Consistent with the two's vision for the credit union, members with a loan on the books were required to save at least 25 cents per week while the loan was active. This encouragement of responsible financial habits improved the overall financial health of those early members. At its first annual meeting on Dec. 31 of that year, the credit union's total number of loans accounted for \$843, and the total assets were \$1, 027.74- a far cry from SPC's current \$160 million in assets.

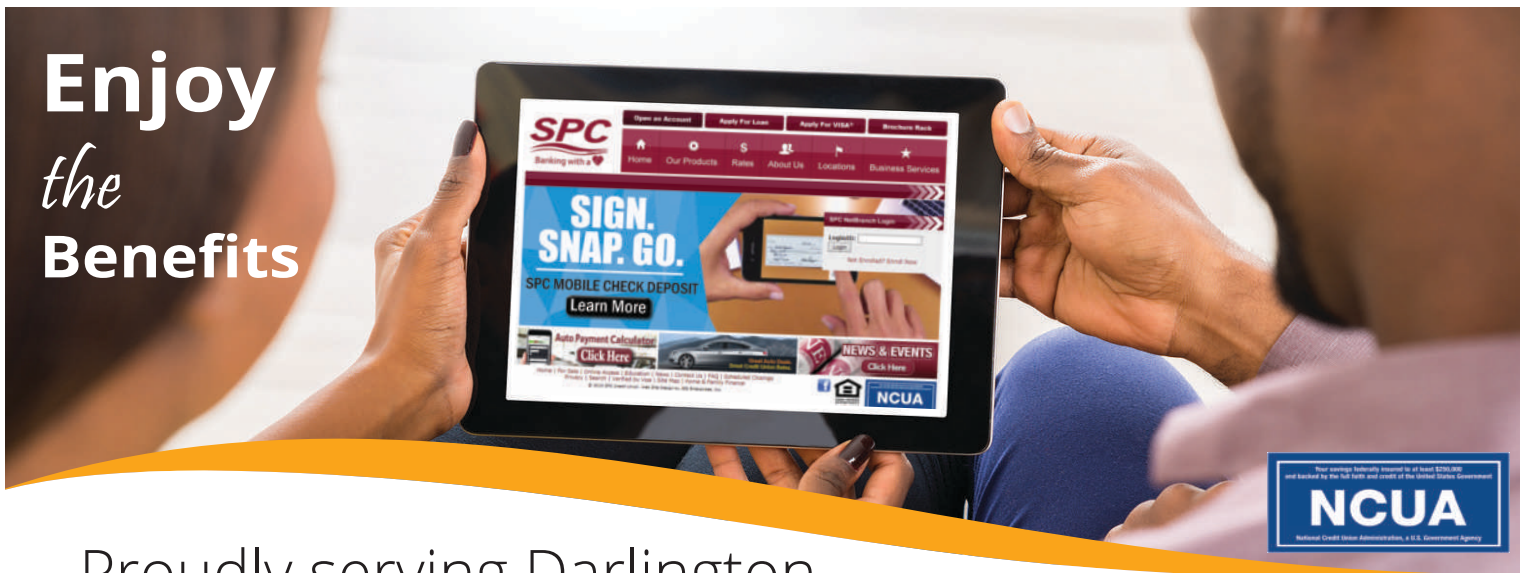
In May of 1983, the board of directors approved an amendment

allowing Byerly Hospital employees and their families to become credit union members. This marked the first expansion of SPC's services to non-Sonoco related organizations. To signify the broadening of its member base, the name changed once again to SPC Cooperative Credit Union in February 1988. Throughout this period of growth, management began looking for a new site to house the main office operation of the credit union. A lack of adequate work space and restricted traffic flow led them to purchase the historic Arcade Hotel building in downtown Hartsville. On July 4, 1989, after significant renovations, SPC moved its main office operation from the building at Sonoco Products Company to 204 North Fifth Street, which continues to act as its main office of operation.

Over the years, SPC added products and services such as mortgage lending, online banking, credit cards and business loans, transforming itself into a full service financial institution. SPC has a passion for innovation, always striving to add value to their members. It was the first credit union in South Carolina to become mortgage loan originators for the State Housing Authority and Fannie Mae Loans.

From humble beginnings exclusively serving the employees of Sonoco, to opening memberships to employees of other select employee groups, SPC has always looked for new ways to bring the benefits of membership to more people. Between 2001 and 2007, SPC transitioned to a community based credit union, serving anyone who lives, works, or attends school in Darlington, Florence and Marlboro Counties.

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You've hired good people, but how do you keep them happy and productive when raises, bonuses, and other forms of compensation may not be in the budget? That's a dilemma many corporations face—especially in today's economy.

One possible solution is to improve your company's benefit package. In fact, a recent report by the Society of Human Resource Management found that "many job seekers frequently place greater importance on health care coverage, flexible work schedules, and other benefits rather than on their base salaries."

Unfortunately, however, some benefits—such as employer-sponsored health care coverage—can be prohibitively expensive. That's why you may want to look into a Voluntary Payroll Deduction (VPD) program like employee-owned life insurance. VPD has become one

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of the most popular ways for consumers to purchase life insurance, and it can be an easy, cost-effective way to show your employees you care. In most cases, these programs can be set up using your existing payroll system, and they are therefore simple to administer. Because the insurance company usually provides all the information and

materials, there are virtually no direct, out-of-pocket costs to your business.

If your company can't afford to give raises this year—or if you just want to help your employees feel a bit more secure—consider adding a Voluntary Payroll Deduction program to your benefit package. When it comes to retaining key employees, it could be the best and the least-expensive investment you ever make.

Note: Employee participation in a payroll deduction insurance program is completely voluntary. Since this program is not intended to be subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), employers cannot contribute to, or endorse, this program.

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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Pictured: Mary Smith – Bishopville Retail Market Manager, NMLS #675548; Martha Skinner – Florence Retail Market Manager, NMLS #664019; Kathy Nigro – Wilson Hall Retail Market Manager, NMLS #711168; Jean Witt – Manning Retail Market Manager, NMLS #642971



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ABB BRINGS FINANCIAL EDUCATION TO LOCAL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Articles submitted by Susan Grant, V.P. Marketing Director/ CRA Officer



Kingstree Middle Magnet School Awards Day

KINGSTREE--This past school year, Anderson Brothers Bank provided student sat Kingstree Middle Magnet School of the Arts with the Le' Tour de Finance online learning course, powered by EverFi. This digital learning program uses the latest in new media technology – simulations, gamification and adaptive pathing –to bring complex financial concepts to life for today's digital generation. More than 30 middle school students have been impacted by this digital learning course. Kathy Cribbs with Anderson Brothers Bank was present at Award Days to present these students with their Certificates.

"From the small rural towns to the major cities across the US, EverFi technology is helping transform how students learn, and we are incredibly grateful for the public-private partnerships that make it possible," said EverFi CEO Tom Davidson.

This program is a web-based program that brings complex financial concepts to life for today's digital generation. Anderson Brothers Bank offers this six-unit course at no cost to Kingstree Middle for their use and contains three hours of programming aimed at teaching, assessing and certifying student in a variety of financial topics including saving, budgeting and job planning. Understanding basic financial knowledge will help them make wise choices in the future.

"More and more evidence suggests that rigorous financial education delivered early in a young person's development leads to positive financial behaviors later in life," said Susan Grant, Anderson Brothers Bank. "By providing middle school students with the knowledge and skills they need to make smart financial decisions, we are investing in the future economic well-being of the communities we serve."

ABB DONATES CAR TO MULLINS POLICE DEPARTMENT



Pictured from Left to Right: Johnny Floyd, Micky Watts, Elmore Bethea, Chief Michael Bethea, Captain Phil Mostowski, Captain Joe Graham, Mullins Mayor, Bo McMillian, and Lisa Nance, Greater Mullins Chamber

MULLINS — Anderson Brothers Bank presented the keys of a 2014 Dodge Charger to the police chief of the Mullins Police Department. Elmore Bethea, Fraud Investigator for Anderson Brothers Bank made the presentation to Chief

Michael Bethea. Others on hand for the presentation were Captain Phil Mostowski, Captain Joe Graham, Mullins Mayor Bo McMillian, VP Marion/Dillon Regional Executive Johnny Floyd, VP Consumer Credit of Anderson Brothers Bank Micky Watts, and Lisa Nance of the Greater Mullins Chamber.

"Anderson Brothers Bank looks for ways we can support the community and our law enforcement to keep us safe and the communities we serve," said VP Marketing Officer Susan Grant, "This is just a small way we can pay it forward."

ABB RAISES OVER \$10,000 FOR DILLON COUNTY RELAY FOR LIFE



MULLINS — Anderson Brothers Bank's Latta Office raised over \$10,000 for American Cancer Society, Dillon County Relay for Life to assist in the continued fight against cancer. ABB's Latta location jump-started their campaign with a \$2500 donation in October right after its office opened. Their

initial goal was to double that donation, and they exceeded that goal in record time and raised it to \$7500. Well, they have exceeded that goal too, and their next goal was to raise \$10,000 by their walk day. The new goal was met and exceeded by Dillon's Relay for Life walk that was held at Dillon Motor Speedway on May 9 where more than 150 supporters were registered to participate.

The ABB Latta team is currently in first place with a total of \$10,780 raised, with four ABB employees in the top 10 and two in the top five. The official cut off for this year's event is the end of August for donations to Dillon Relay for Life.

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life is the world's largest and most impactful fundraising event to end cancer. It unites communities across the globe to celebrate people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and take action to finish the fight once and for all. Today, with the support of thousands of volunteers like you, the American Cancer Society is helping save more than 400 lives a day.

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WHO CAN BORROW



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our territory that provide services directly to agricultural producers. We also have borrowers who live outside the area but use the loan funds in our territory.

Below are general guidelines for who can borrow per category of borrower. Please feel free to contact us to discuss your particular situation or if you have specific questions.

Full-Time Farmers

For individuals whose primary business (over 50 percent of assets and income) is the production of agricultural products, ArborOne can lend for all agricultural and family needs, including non-agricultural needs. This could include, but is not limited to, automobiles and trucks, educational expenses, home improvements, vacation expenses and much more.

Part-Time Farmers

For individuals who own agricultural land or produce agricultural products and whose income from agricultural products is less than 50 percent of their total income, ArborOne can lend for all agricultural and family needs. Non-agricultural needs are limited relative to the agricultural income.

Businesses

ArborOne can lend money to businesses which process and/or market agricultural products as long as more than 50 percent of the business is owned by farmers who provide at least some of the "throughput." ArborOne can also lend money to businesses that provide services to farmers, such as crop spraying, seed cleaning, harvesting and more. The extent to which financing can be provided is based on the amount of the business's total income from farm-related services.

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ENLIGHTENING OTHERS ABOUT BRAIN CANCER AWARENESS

by Anna Bowman



Dr. Fredrica Brooks-Davis

MARYLAND --The Brooks-Davis Institute for Brain Cancer Awareness was co-founded by husband and wife, Teddy Davis and Dr. Fredrica Brooks-Davis. The happy couple, who exchanged vows during a beautiful wedding ceremony on Sept. 3, 2011, like any newly married couple, anticipated living a joyous and fulfilling life together, and in retrospect, they indeed accomplished that dream. But unexpectedly, without warning, their love story took a disquieting turn, which ultimately transformed their lives, while

simultaneously creating a lasting testament to their enduring love.

After only three months of marriage, Brooks-Davis arrived home to find her husband unconscious. After several days in the hospital and undergoing a series of tests, the couple received the news of a brain tumor diagnosis. "Without question, the strength Teddy and I had to face his brain tumor diagnosis together after three months of marriage was rooted in our individual and collective relationship with God," said Brooks-Davis. "From day one we agreed to celebrate life each day and take it one day at a time. We refused to allow cancer to dictate our life which meant our celebrations and date nights were not predicated on how he felt or our physical location." Their love story continued to grow and flourish, celebrating his birthday in the hospital, Valentine's Day in a rehabilitation facility and their wedding anniversary in a hotel room accompanied by an IV drip administering medication.

Brooks-Davis recalls conversations the two of them shared which would eventually lead to the creation of the Brooks-Davis Institute for Brain Cancer Awareness. "While we were celebrating life, Teddy and I observed many couples become overwhelmed by the diagnosis, hospital stay, bills and family demands, which often meant there was no time or energy left for them to focus on themselves, let alone their relationship. When we discussed the goals of the Institute we knew helping couples reconnect would be one of the goals: "We wanted other couples to be intentional about experiencing joy in the midst of the storm." Her husband also wanted to do something special for the community and during one of their conversations the idea to donate teddy bears to children in the hospital during the holiday season was one of the major goals they wanted to share with their community.

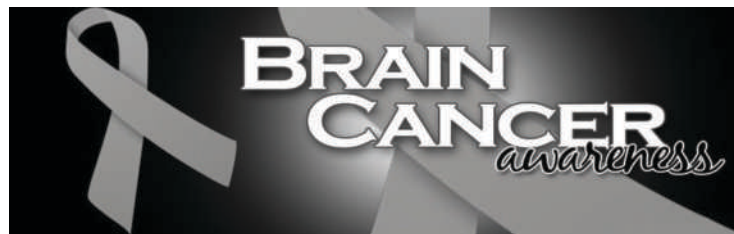


Dr. Fredrica Brooks-Davis and her husband, Teddy.

With an amalgamation of dreams, love and aspirations, on January 24, 2014, the idea, which started from their personal experience with brain cancer, officially became the Brooks-Davis Institute for Brain Cancer Awareness. As the co-founder of the Institute, Brooks-Davis gives insight into its mission: "We want to raise brain cancer awareness, contribute to the underrepresented areas of brain cancer research, and enrich the lives of couples and children facing a cancer diagnosis."

Shortly after the opening of the Institute, Teddy Davis--husband, father, step-father, and friend--made a peaceful transition on July 11, 2014 with the love of his life, his beloved wife by his side. Since her husband's transition, the Institute has grown by leaps and bounds into an organization that is befitting his memory. The Institute's first initiative was requesting that in lieu of flowers for Davis' homegoing service

donations be sent to the University of Maryland Medical Center's Department of Radiation Oncology. The donations were used to support a new research study inspired by his journey. The research study was initiated the University of Maryland Medical Center and is currently underway at the University of Alabama Birmingham. The Institute's additional achievements include, and are not limited to, donating teddy bears to the University of Maryland Children's Hospital and preparing dinner for patients and families staying at the American Cancer Society's Hope Lodge in Baltimore.



Today, the Brooks-Davis Institute for Brain Cancer Awareness (BDIBCA), has entrusted its continuous growth and development to a group of stellar professionals, who continue to enlighten the public about brain cancer awareness.

Recently, on June 3, Brooks-Davis, a Florence native and daughter of former Florence School District One Superintendent Allie (Barbara) Brooks Jr., hosted a benefit concert at the Francis Marion Performing Arts Center to raise awareness about brain cancer in her hometown. The concert was a musical tribute to co-founder Teddy Davis, who had a stellar career as a mix engineer and keyboardist in the music industry, alongside such musical artists as Miki Howard, Calvin Richardson, Ginuwine, Raheem DeVaughn, 112, Dru Hill, Sisqo, Total, and the Stylistics, whom he'd performed with for 12 years as a dedicated member of "The Style Orchestra."

Proceeds from the benefit concert, will help to fulfill another dream of the organization to offer a Couple's Enrichment Weekend to couples diagnosed with any terminal illness within the first three years of marriage. During the weekend event, couples will reconnect and focus on their love for one another. The first Couples' Enrichment Weekend is scheduled to take place October 6-8 in Florence. The Institute is proud to announce that Hotel Florence has agreed to serve as one of the partners for this event. "We need the support of everyone to help us identify couples that meet the criteria for the Couples' Enrichment Weekend or sponsor a couple. Our ultimate goal is to host the Couples' Enrichment Weekend (CEW) across the country," said Brooks-Davis.

To donate online or to learn more about the Brooks-Davis IBCA visit www.brooks-davis.org/donate. Checks can be made payable to Brooks-Davis IBCA, and may be mailed to Brooks-Davis IBCA P.O. Box 15004 Pikesville, M.D., 21282. For more information email awareness@brooks-davis.org, call 301-404-5651, or reach via Facebook [@brooksdavisibca1](https://www.facebook.com/brooksdavisibca1).



SAFELY SERVING TEENS ON THE RURAL SCENE

by Ta' Meeka Epps



Angela Council, CFNP

CareSouth Carolina is a federally qualified health center with 12 offices in rural communities in South Carolina. A Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) is more commonly known as a Community Health Center (CHC) and is a primary care center that is community-based and patient-directed. By mission and design, CHCs exist to serve those who have limited access to health care although all are welcome.

CareSouth provides comprehensive primary and pediatric care, dental care, gynecology, infectious disease, pharmacy and community outreach. CareSouth Carolina is a leader in healthcare, meeting needs and changing the lives of people regardless of their circumstances. CareSouth strives to provide excellent patient care with highly trained physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, therapists and staff. The staff works with patients across all social and economic backgrounds to ensure they have access to the healthcare, programs and services.

CareSouth Carolina and the high quality services it provides is matched only by the exceptionally trained staff that provides patients with superb care and customer service. Giving exemplary service and care to the patients in the Bishopville office of CareSouth Carolina is a family nurse practitioner by the name of Angela Council. Council has been employed with CareSouth Carolina for two years. She also completed most of her clinical training at CareSouth while completing post graduate studies.

Council has been living her passion while building her career as a nurse for the last 23 years. "I love nursing because I was able to work in any area I chose. Throughout the years, I was able to expand my knowledge base, gaining invaluable experience which has enhanced my

personal growth and professional development," stated Council.

Family nurse practitioners (FNPs) place a strong emphasis on wellness and prevention but also provide treatment and diagnosis for everything from mild ailments to serious conditions affecting any member of the family, from children to grandparents. Family nurse practitioners educate and guide patients on disease prevention and healthy lifestyle habits. FNPs care about their patients and their overall health. "I advise my patients upfront that we are a team. I cannot help them if they are not willing to help themselves. I try to encourage them and support them throughout the process when diagnosed with acute problems or chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension," Council explained.

Council's desire when choosing CareSouth Carolina was to serve in rural communities to ensure individuals living in rural areas were educated regarding their health and had access to care and various programs available to them. In addition, she was born and raised in rural South Carolina and is aware of the health disparities that plagued the community.

Council is proud of the work being done at CareSouth Carolina, which includes Teen Scene, a confidential, safe and friendly place for teenagers to receive the assistance needed. The Teen Scene Health Center is located in the Bishopville office. Teens have a private waiting area with teen friendly staff waiting to service them. Services provided include sick visits, physicals for athletic participation, primary care checkups, Pap smear exams, immunizations, counseling services, testing and treatment for sexually-transmitted infections, birth control and pregnancy testing.

The goal is to provide quality health care. The level of concern and care given to the patients at CareSouth gives a firsthand account of what service looks like when put into action. Angela Council and the staff at CareSouth Carolina in Bishopville are committed to serving the patients and the community in which they operate.

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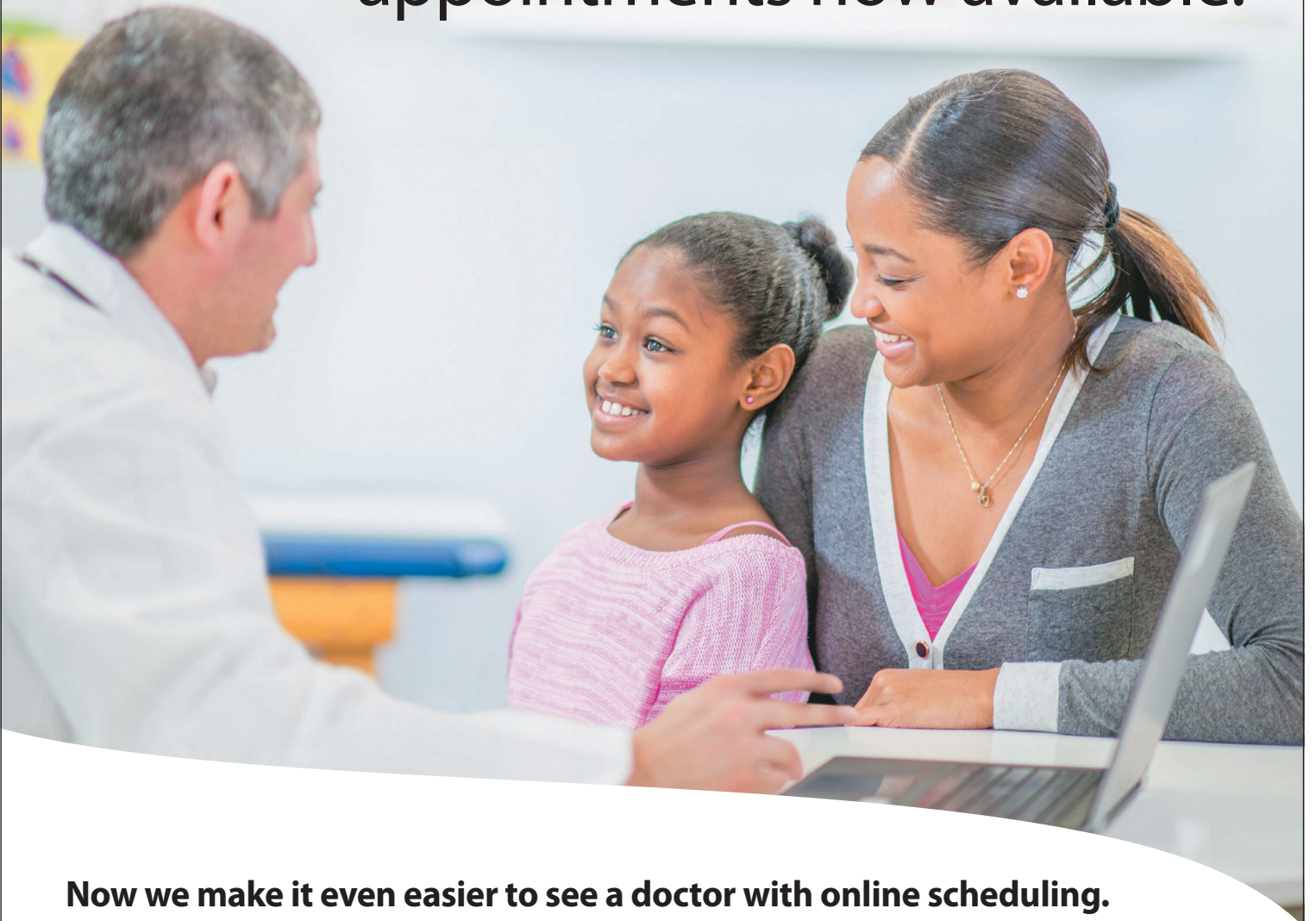
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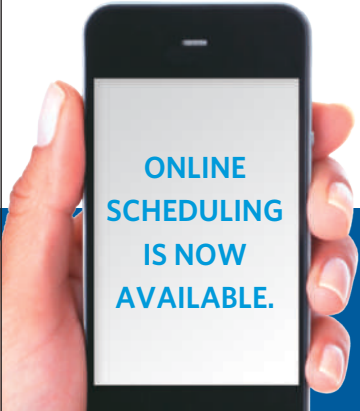


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GET INFORMED ABOUT DIABETES

Submitted by Donna Tracy, Communication Coordinator HopeHealth

An unquenchable thirst plagues your day, you find yourself visiting the restroom constantly, and you feel more tired and hungry than normal.



Anita Longan, right, a registered dietitian nutritionist at the HopeHealth Medical Plaza in Florence, uses models of foods such as broccoli to visually explain appropriate portion sizes during a nutrition discussion with Clifton Wyndam. Photo/Bradley Lail, HopeHealth

It could be that you are one of the more than 29 million people in the U.S. who have diabetes mellitus and one of the 1.7 million or more people diagnosed with the disease annually.

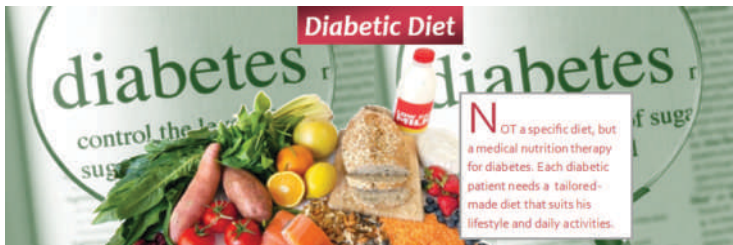
There are three main forms of diabetes mellitus, commonly known as type 1 diabetes, type 2 diabetes, and gestational diabetes. All impact how our bodies

make or use the hormone insulin. Those diagnosed with type 1 diabetes cannot make insulin. Those with type 2 diabetes may make insulin but do not use it well. Gestational diabetes develops in some women during pregnancy and often disappears after birth but can lead to type 2 diabetes.

The body uses insulin to break down glucose from foods for energy. If glucose isn't broken down, it stays in the bloodstream. Over time, high blood glucose levels can lead to health problems such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, blindness, dental disease, nerve damage and lower-limb amputations. People with type 1 diabetes manage their blood glucose levels with insulin shots several times a day. Depending on the severity of glucose levels, those with type 2 diabetes can manage the disease with dietary choices, activity levels and medications such as insulin.

There are several tests used to diagnose diabetes. The most common include an A1C test, which measures the average glucose levels in the blood over the previous three months and is reported as a percentage. An A1C of 6.5 percent or higher is considered diabetes, between 5.7 and 6.4 is considered pre-diabetes, and below 5.7 is normal. A pre-diabetes diagnosis means the individual hasn't yet developed diabetes but, without lifestyle changes, is likely to do so.

The number of individuals being diagnosed with diabetes is increasing. In 1994, South Carolina topped Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data charts with 6.2 percent of the state's residents diagnosed with diabetes. The lowest rate that year was reported by Montana at just 2.3 percent. By 2014, the top incident rate as reported by Puerto Rico and had more than doubled to 14.2 percent. At 10.7 percent, South Carolina had dropped to 11th in the nation. However, the two states with the lowest diabetes rates, Colorado and Vermont, reported a 6.9 percent prevalence, which is triple the lowest rate of just 20 years earlier.



The cost of diabetes is enormous. Financially, individuals with diabetes average about \$13,700 in medical costs per year, an estimated 2.3 times higher cost than for individuals without the disease. As a nation, a 2012 study by the American Diabetes Association put the economic cost of diabetes at \$245 billion with \$176 billion from direct medical costs and \$69 billion from lost productivity due to work absenteeism, reduced productivity, disability, and premature death. Include pre-diabetes, and the total economic cost rises to \$322 billion.

The cost of living with diabetes can be just as high. Monitoring food intake, measuring glucose levels, managing insulin, and the day-to-day routine of living with diabetes can be a daunting task. This is especially true for those newly diagnosed with the disease who often have to adjust their diets in significant ways and can struggle with the demands of watching every meal, every snack, every bite of food they eat, and even every beverage they drink.

A variety of programs are available to not only help patients diagnosed with diabetes learn how to manage the disease, but also programs and services designed to help prevent or delay development of diabetes and address other diet-related health concerns. Such programs include:

- **Medical Nutrition Therapy/ Nutrition Counseling**
Medical nutrition therapy and nutrition counseling are one-on-one sessions covering many different nutrition related conditions. These include food allergies, weight management, blood pressure control, kidney disease, and more. Medical nutrition therapy is covered by Medicare for those diagnosed with diabetes and legislative efforts are underway to offer the same for those diagnosed with pre-diabetes through the Preventing Diabetes in Medicare Act (H.R. 1686).
- **Better Choices Better Health Program**
Designed for adults with any type of chronic condition such as high blood pressure, arthritis, or depression, Better Choices Better Health is a six-week, small-group program that focuses on developing skills for healthy eating, moving more, managing pain and stress as well as working with patients' providers to manage overall health.
- **National Diabetes Prevention Program**
Focused on providing skills for healthy eating and physical activity, the National Diabetes Prevention Program is designed to help pre-diabetics make lifestyle changes over time.

For more information on diabetes and related programs, visit www.hope-health.org/services/diabetes-nutrition-center-florence-sc/ or <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/programs/index.html>



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CHS PHARMACIST RECEIVES RECOGNITION

Articles submitted by Carolinas Hospital System



Erin Brewer, PharmD

Carolinan Hospital System is pleased to announce that Erin Brewer, PharmD was selected as the Low Country Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience (IPPE) Hospital Preceptor of the Year and the Low Country Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) Hospital Preceptor of the Year by the South Carolina College of Pharmacy (SCCP). This is the first time in the program's history that a SCCP preceptor has received both the IPPE and APPE awards in the same year.

SCCP students nominate preceptors for the Preceptor of the Year

awards, annually. Criteria addressed in the award nominations include being a role model practitioner; being an effective, organized, and enthusiastic teacher; and possessing strong leadership skills.

Experiential education accounts for almost a third of the Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum. Preceptors like Dr. Brewer are vital to ensuring quality experiential training and the future success of student pharmacists trained at Carolinas Hospital System.

"We are proud of Dr. Brewer's dedication to her profession and Carolinas Hospital System, which shows through her outstanding commitment to her colleagues and student pharmacists. We congratulate her on these honorable recognitions," said Gary Malaer, chief executive officer for Carolinas Hospital System.

CHS HONORS VOLUNTEERS



Grace and James Davis

Carolinan Hospital System recently hosted its annual Volunteer Awards Luncheon at the Floyd Conference Center. The event was in recognition of National Volunteer Week and celebrated the numerous contributions made by volunteers at the hospital.

In 2016, the volunteers donated 7,500 hours of service and nine volunteers donated over 300 hours during the year. Dan Allen, Lou Dixon, Bonnie Schenk, Carol Turner, Ron Cann, Dee Dixon, Andy McCloy, Irene Brown and Pinkney

Speights were each honored for donating more than 300 hours.

Volunteers dedicated their time to many projects such as greeting

and escorting patients and visitors, assisting with discharges, serving as resources at information desks, assisting staff with clerical duties, volunteering at the Senior Life Expo and much more.

This year's recipients of the Service Excellence Award were Geraldine Waters and Jim McCormick. The award is presented to a volunteer who consistently demonstrates a passion of volunteering with a positive and compassionate manner.

The Service Excellence and Most Hours of Service Award was presented to Pinkney Speights.

The Volunteer of the Year Awards were presented to Grace Davis and James Davis. The Volunteer of the Year Award is presented to a volunteer who demonstrates extraordinary efforts in his/her performance, attitude and commitment to the mission of Carolinas Hospital System.

We are extremely proud of our volunteers and appreciate their dedication and time to the day-to-day operations of the hospital.

SWAMP FOX SPINNERS RIDE FOR ALZHEIMER'S

Submitted by Ta'Meeka Epps



Left to Right: Jane Heath, Janet Brand, Renita Boan, Teresa Webster, Heather Moody; Back: Dr. Cynthia Kolb
Missing Team members: Renee Williams, Chrissy Selleck, Lindsey Coward and Ron Harrelson

of early onset Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's changes typically begin in the part of the brain that affects learning. As Alzheimer's advances through the brain, it leads to increasingly severe symptoms that may include disorientation, mood and behavior changes; deepening confusion about events, time and place; unfounded suspicions about family, friends and professional caregivers; severe memory loss and behavior changes; and difficulty speaking, swallowing or walking.

A Ride to Remember: S.C. Alzheimer's Association started its chapter in 2009. Its mission was simple to increase awareness about Alzheimer's disease, raise funds to support patients and their families and to pay for education and research on Alzheimer's and other dementia. The ride has grown by leaps and bounds over the last eight years, and representing the Pee Dee Region this year is a team of 10 cyclists known as the Swamp Fox Spinners.

The inaugural Ride to Remember saw 60 cyclists raise \$30,000, and with continued support the 2016 ride, had over 300 cyclists raising well over \$350,000 for Alzheimer's and the Alzheimer's Association. The goal

Our brains, just like the rest of our body, changes as we age. Slowed thinking and occasional problems with remembering things may plague all of us as we age. Our mind has a way of alerting us to potential brain cell breakdown. Difficulty remembering newly learned information maybe a clear indicator

of a Ride to Remember for 2017 is \$500,000 and before the start of the race they have secured over 60 percent of their goal.

As the largest nonprofit funder of Alzheimer's research, the Association is committed to accelerating the global progress of new treatments, preventions and ultimately, a cure. The Alzheimer's Association works on a global, national and local level to provide care and support for all those affected by Alzheimer's and other dementias.

The mission of the Alzheimer's Association is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health. "Our team wants to be a part of this important mission by raising funds and awareness in our own community," stated Janet Brand. The funds raised through the Ride to Remember event benefits the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association.

The Swamp Fox Spinners made a team goal to raise \$10,000 in its effort to help fight Alzheimer's and has been able to meet over 90 percent of the goal prior to the kickoff three-day event.

Janet Brand and the Swamp Fox Spinners have committed to completing the three-day scenic journey through South Carolina on July 14-16. Day one the cyclists will travel from Simpsonville to Newberry (65 miles), day two they will ride from Newberry to Orangeburg (89 miles), and day three the cyclists will make their way from Orangeburg to Charleston, covering the most miles of the three day event (99 miles).

The cross-state ride is fully supported throughout the event. Participants will be provided three meals daily; well-stocked water/nutrition stops every 10-15 miles; exceptional medical and mechanical support, as well as an outstanding volunteer support staff.

With continued research the goal is to eradicate Alzheimer's and bring an end to the suffering of the patients and their families. The Swamp Fox Spinners are proud to be a part of a Race to Remember educating the community about the effects of Alzheimer's and dementia.

DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP

Submitted by the McLeod Foundation



McLeod Fellows Graduating Class 2017

It is a chance for these community leaders to get a behind the scenes look at medicine and to explore the complex issues driving healthcare today while demonstrating the continuing need for philanthropy.

Throughout the program, participants have one-of-a-kind experiences and gain insight into medical and technological advances through access to areas of McLeod Health not commonly available to the public. They have the opportunity to network with members of the medical community from a wide variety of specialties.

By the end of the program, the participants have obtained a working knowledge of the healthcare needs of our community and how McLeod Health and the McLeod Health Foundation are meeting those needs.

The McLeod Foundation held a graduation for the eleventh class of McLeod Fellows in May. The McLeod Fellows Class of 2017 dedicated its time for nine months to gain a behind-the-scenes perspective on healthcare and how McLeod Health is working to provide excellent care for our region. Please join us in congratulating our newest graduates.

For more information about being nominated to be a McLeod Fellow please contact the McLeod Foundation at 843-777-2694.

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ARE YOU AT RISK FOR OVARIAN CANCER?

Submitted by *Germina Suffrant, M.D.*



Germina Suffrant, M.D.

Every year, nearly 20,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Unlike other cancers, ovarian cancer silently plagues women with subtle symptoms or none at all. Since there's currently no simple screening test for ovarian cancer, it's important to know potential warning signs.

Identifying Symptoms

Although women ages 50 and older are more likely to develop ovarian cancer, it can also affect younger women.

Because mild discomfort could be misconstrued as menstrual cycle symptoms, ovarian cancer is easily ignored. According to the American Cancer Society, women should pay attention to the following symptoms of ovarian cancer:

- . Bloating
- . Back pain
- . Fatigue
- . Pain during sex
- . Pelvic or abdominal pain
- . Trouble eating or feeling full quickly
- . Urinary symptoms, such as urgency (always feeling like you have to go) or frequency (having to go more often)

Certain factors may increase your risk for ovarian cancer, such as:

- . A previous cancer diagnosis
- . Family history of ovarian cancer
- . Hormone replacement therapy for menopause
- . Increasing age

Sidebar:

The Connection to Motherhood

While ovarian cancer cannot be prevented, research suggests that women who have had one or more children are less likely to develop it. Breastfeeding for at least one year also lowers a woman's risk of developing ovarian cancer.

After pregnancy, some women opt to have their fallopian tubes tied. This also lowers the risk of ovarian cancer. Women should consult their physician before undergoing this procedure.

Even women who do not have children can take an active role in reducing their risk of ovarian cancer. Women should be sure to eat a balanced diet packed with colorful fruits and vegetables and exercise at least 30 minutes per day most days of the week. If you are concerned about your risk for ovarian cancer, talk to your physician.

Additional Facts:

- Ovarian cancer is the fifth-leading cause of cancer-related death among women.
- A woman's risk of getting ovarian cancer in her lifetime is about one in 71.
- More than half of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer are 60 years of age or older.

About Author

Dr. Suffrant is board certified in OB/GYN medicine. She is associated with Carolinas OB/GYN Associates, an affiliate of Carolinas Medical Alliance, and she is a member of the medical staff at Carolinas Hospital System. The practice is located in The Women's Center on the Carolinas Hospital System campus. To schedule an appointment, call 843-629-1791.

Sources: cancer.gov, nlm.nih.gov, cbsnews.com, foxnews.com

LIFE AFTER CANCER

Submitted by *Ziad G. Skaff, M.D.*



Germina Suffrant, M.D.

When you receive a clean bill of health after undergoing cancer treatment, maintaining a healthier lifestyle becomes more important than ever before. As your follow-up appointments decrease and your daily routine returns, plan to make adjustments so you feel your best.

When settling back into a schedule that works for you, consider:

Dietary changes. Your physicians may have recommended that you eat more protein while undergoing treatment. Now is the time to add back in fresh fruits and vegetables, supplemented with low-fat dairy and whole grains. If you are still dealing with the side effects of treatment, such as nausea or loss of appetite, consider nutrient-rich snacks throughout the day, such as an apple with cheese or celery and peanut butter.

. Physical activity. As your energy increases, plan to exercise at least five days a week. Start off by walking or attending a yoga class, and then work your way up to more strenuous exercises as your body allows.

. Emotional support. Whether you're heading back to work or coming to terms with your recent cancer treatment, it's important to have people to depend on. Feeling angry or sad is natural. Come to terms with your feelings by writing in a journal or speaking with a trusted friend.

Sidebar:

The Breast Cancer — Brain Connection

A new study has found that women who are diagnosed with breast cancer are more likely to experience brain fog, also known as chemo

brain. The study, published in the Archives of Neurology, consisted of 18 women with no history of breast cancer, 19 women who were diagnosed with breast cancer but did not undergo chemotherapy, and 25 women who underwent chemotherapy for breast cancer treatment.

Participants in the study were monitored with magnetic resonance imaging while completing a card-sorting task that activated various parts of the brain.

Researchers found that women could experience brain fog whether or not they underwent chemotherapy. However, women who received chemotherapy had the most pronounced neurological impairment, including needing more time to complete rule-based tasks.

Facts:

Nearly 15 million Americans who have been diagnosed with cancer are living in the United States, according to the Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention.

Cancer survival rates of five years or more continue to rise, with the highest survival rates being for breast and prostate cancer survivors, according to the National Cancer Institute.

About the Author: Dr. Ziad Skaff is board certified in Internal Medicine and Hematology/Oncology. He is associated with Carolinas Hematology & Oncology, an affiliate of Carolinas Medical Alliance, and he is a member of the medical staff at Carolinas Hospital System. He is accepting new patients. To refer a patient, please contact Dr. Skaff's office by calling 843-674-6460.

Sources:

medpagetoday.com, familydoctor.org, cancer.gov, time.com



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ENCOURAGING OTHERS THAT RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Nicole Cogdell-Quick, LPC, NAC, CAC, SAP

Addiction is a terrible disease that afflicts every segment of our community. It is a complex disorder that involves virtually every aspect of an individual's functioning—their family, work, school and community. Since it is such a complex and pervasive problem, addiction treatment should be sought from professionals, licensed and experienced in providing a variety of proven, effective treatment approaches and services.

Since its inception in 1973, the Florence County Commission on Alcohol and other Drug Abuse Services, doing business as Circle Park Behavioral Health Services, has been the primary provider of alcohol and other drug prevention, intervention and treatment services. Circle Park is guided by and steadfastly adheres to its mission to reduce the



impact of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse on the citizens of Florence County by providing high quality and cost effective behavioral health services.

The agency's services are housed in

two separate facilities. Its Outpatient, Community and Administrative Services are located at its main campus at 238 South Coit St., and its Women's Residential Services, the Chrysalis Center, located at 1430 South Cashua St. It is licensed by the South Carolina Department of Social Services, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Circle Park Behavioral Health Services believes that addiction is preventable and treatable. However, it is not a simple problem with a simple solution. It is a life threatening disease that affects people of all ages, races, economic levels and educational backgrounds. At Circle Park treatment is combined with intervention and prevention to deal with the symptoms of abuse and addiction, but also with their causes. The counselors at Circle Park are trained to deal with the issues of addiction, couple's issues, children's behavioral problems, family crises and a wide variety of other problems. One such counselor is Nicole Cogdell-Quick.

Cogdell-Quick is a native of Tucson, A.Z. She is the daughter of Darrell Cogdell of Pinewood and Edna and Larry Lambert of Sumter. She is the second oldest of seven, the wife to Calvin Quick Jr., and the proud mother of Caitlyn Quick. As a result of being a military brat,



Cogdell-Quick attended schools in Arizona, Missouri, Germany and South Carolina. Upon graduating from Sumter High School in 1997, she attended Francis Marion University where she completed her B.S. in psychology in 2000 and received her Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology from Argosy University in 2002.

Cogdell-Quick has been



employed with CPBHS since January 2013 as a clinical counselor. In 2002, she was an intern for nine months while working on her master's degree in counseling psychology. After

completing the internship her career aspirations would see her leave the Florence area. However, she would return and find her calling leading her back to Circle Park Behavioral Health Services.

Cogdell-Quick serves as a counselor because she feels it is her divine calling in life to help others in seeing their true potential and teaching them skills and concepts to begin a new life while being a cheerleader in their ear encouraging them to not quit, but to keep going because recovery is possible.

Recovery is a total lifestyle change from what people have known as their "normal" or "the way it has always been." The first challenge is admitting there is a problem, revealing total honesty, dealing with emotions that are not easily identified, dealing with past and current traumas, establishing and maintaining a positive social support system and regaining family trust and support. Addiction is such a devastating disease, not only to the individual, but also to others around them, specifically their family. Addiction has the potential to steal, kill and destroy a person's joy, independence, self-worth, health, family, freedom, spiritual connection and stability.

Nicole Cogdell-Quick has worked in the public and private sectors as a clinical counselor for the past 15 years. She is nationally and state certified as an addictions counselor (MAC/CACII) and licensed by the state of South Carolina as a professional counselor (LPC).

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GE HEALTHCARE'S EXPANSION PLANS

by Les Echols



Greg Cunningham

Aside from being one of the biggest and most successful companies in the world, GE Healthcare has the management of people and personalities down to a science. The GE brand has become synonymous with success, growth and longevity. Diversity and inclusion are also important factors in the day-to-day operations and philosophies of GE Healthcare, a fact that will take on new significance with the impending expansion of the Florence plant. With 30-years of operations in South Carolina, GE Healthcare's MR magnet production facility

in Florence is home to 350 local employees and represents Florence County's seventh largest industrial employer. The Florence plant makes the magnet part of the MRI systems, which is one component, albeit, the biggest component. We spoke with GE about its expansion and mindset of diversity as the norm, not the exception.

GE Healthcare is growing its existing operations in Florence

County with a \$40 million capacity expansion, which is projected to create about 100 new jobs. The Company will be expanding their existing production of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) components due to several new products recently added to the portfolio. This 500,000-square foot site specializes in designing, manufacturing and testing the superconducting magnet components of the system. The expansion will be



GE Healthcare



imagination at work

completed in phases with initial operations underway this spring. Greg Cunningham, site HR business partner for the Florence plant, was excited about the growth. "Along with adding 80,000-100,000 square feet, we will be adding 100 jobs over the next year and a half," per Cunningham. Cunningham is also the primary person responsible for culture and change management, which includes integrating people into the GE culture and making sure they fit in and feel like part of the team. He also went into detail about the importance of diversity as a part of the corporate culture.

"GE values diversity as a primary staple," said Cunningham. "When resolving internal issues, we need people from different places to see solutions from differing perspectives. One reason GE is a leader is because of our willingness to embrace diversity to help us become a better company," he continued. "That is why, from a hiring standpoint, we are always looking for people from different backgrounds with

varying experience who can adapt to GE culture, as well as either work alone or contribute to a team." Cunningham also added that GE puts a lot of effort into growth and development of its employees, both new and experienced.



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

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KEY TO HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

Submitted by Tiffany Straus, HopeHealth Director of Community Relations

Caring for more than 25 million Americans annually, community health centers work together to provide families with health care homes where affordable, high-quality primary and preventive care services are available. Another major role of health centers is to assist in lowering the use of emergency department visits for preventable situations.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 130 million people visit emergency departments each year. Of those visits, an average of only 12 million visits result in hospital admission, and nearly 30 percent of the visits take less than 15 minutes. With those statistics, it is safe to say that a large number of the annual emergency department visits could be avoided with proper prevention and regular visits to primary care physicians. In 2015, the National Association of Community Health Centers reported that 39.5 percent of ED visits could have been handled in a primary care setting. In some states, this percentage has been reported to be much higher. Because a large percentage of those misusing the emergency departments have Medicaid coverage or are uninsured, community health centers must be part of the solution.

Across the HopeHealth areas of service, data is continuously collected and monitored for the purpose of improving the over utilization of local emergency departments. Among the top complaints documented in the ED were various symptoms relating to chronic conditions, abdominal pain, neck and back pain, urinary tract infections, behavioral health complications, and dental discomfort. Many of the noted complaints could have been prevented and/or treated more efficiently by primary care providers in settings where health care homes can be developed and maintained. Therefore, why do so many overlook the step of visiting primary care providers?

"The cost of unnecessary emergency department visits is staggering both to the health care system and to patients," explained Ed Behling, MD, chief medical officer at HopeHealth.

However, more concerning than the financial impact are the serious consequences which can affect these patients. Emergency departments are uniquely equipped to care for patients who have severe life threatening conditions, or problems that could progress quickly without urgent intervention. This setting is not designed to evaluate and treat chronic conditions or to provide screening and preventive services.

Behling went on to explain that "patients who seek care primarily in emergency rooms will not receive comprehensive and ongoing care, nor will they experience the ability to develop long-term caring partnerships with a healthcare provider, which is the hallmark of primary care."

Having an ongoing relationship with a health care provider allows for a patient's medical history to be recorded in one place and rapport to be built, which promotes open and honest health-related discussion. The primary care provider's role is to serve as "central command" when there are one or more specialists involved in the care of a patient. This role is very important and helps to avoid confusion and conflict in care plans and medication regimens.

By studying the reasons behind frequent non-emergent and preventable hospital visits, community health centers like HopeHealth have formed partnerships to focus on providing preventive programs and services that are accessible and affordable. And, through these partnerships, we continue to redirect frequent emergency department users into the primary care setting where patients can establish regular health care homes that will focus on building trust through long-term patient/provider relationships, coordinated care, and the prevention of future illness and all the while helping improve the overall health of our communities.



CAROLINAS HOSPITAL SYSTEM RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING NURSES/SUPPORT STAFF

Submitted by Carolinas Hospital System



Robin Carroll, RN

In honor of the national celebration of Nurses Week in May, Carolinas Hospital System held a ceremony to highlight the many contributions and achievements of our nursing staff.

The 2017 Nurse of the Year Award was presented to James Rand, RN. He has a reputation for being one of the most professional, knowledgeable and compassionate nurses. Weekly, Rand is recognized by patients and their family members. Physicians, peers, and students respect him and describe him as resourceful, professional and ethical. He models the

positive behaviors that we all know as the Carolinas Difference.

Another outstanding and devoted nurse, Robin Carroll, RN, was presented The Patient Choice Award. Carroll's dedication to providing outstanding care exceeds not only our expectations, but also those of our patients.

Carolinas Hospital System and Nursing Services presented the following additional awards and recognitions during the ceremony:

- Elijah Owens, MD – Physician Friend of Nursing
- Shawn Polk, Clinical Informaticist Coordinator – Nursing Leadership Champion
- Betty Dotson, Secretary, Emergency Department – Nursing Support Champion

This year we have added a new category called Rising Stars. Some nurses stand out from the moment they enter the profession. Their caring natures ensure they will not only offer compassionate care themselves but will also demand it of those around them and raise



James Rand, RN

concerns if it falls short. Nurses like these will be a positive influence on the profession throughout their careers. We had 12 nurses who merit this recognition:

- Morgan Collins, Falinda Delly, Crystal Fulgencio, Loren Graham, Brandy Hayes, Bianca Lopez-Obregon, Kayla Miner, Lesleigh Norris, Amanda Rhodus, Nisheeka Simmons, Kelly Thomson, Terri Tomberlin

The Dr. Frank B. Lee Sr. Outstanding Nursing Unit Award was given to the Operating Room. This year's recipient was recognized for contributions to improving patient safety and quality of care for the patients we serve.

"I want to sincerely thank all of our Nursing Services employees for their passion and their compassion," said Costa Cockfield, chief nursing officer. "We thank them for never losing sight of our mission to exceed our customers' expectations and appreciate them for earning our patients' trust."



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DON'T SKIP OUT ON CHECKING IN, GUYS!

Submitted by Roberto Miranda, M.D.



Roberto Miranda, M.D.

Reluctance to schedule routine checkups can prevent early intervention for a number of diseases that become more challenging to treat as they progress.

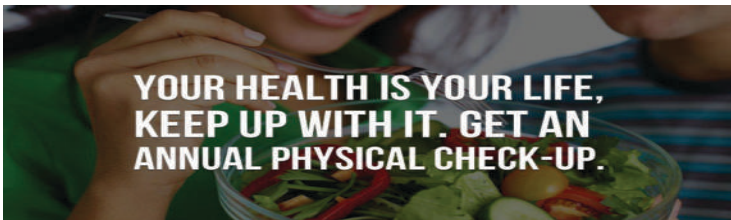
Establishing a relationship with a primary care physician sooner rather than later can allow for simpler, less invasive and more effective treatments. Many diseases, such as cancer and heart disease, can be treated much more easily if detected early. Left unchecked, these diseases and disorders can be devastating.

Even permanent disorders, such as diabetes, can be controlled if detected sooner. Having extra time to implement lifestyle changes has a greater effect on the management of the disease. Special diets, therapies and exercise regimens take time to start and more time to impact your health.

Why Should I Go to the Doctor?

Seeking medical help is far from admitting weakness. Some things require expertise to repair. If your car breaks down and you don't know how to fix it, you take it to a mechanic. If your health breaks down and you don't know what the problem is, there is no shame in seeing doctor. It's important to recognize that you cannot fix every medical issue by yourself.

Physicians undergo extensive training in order to effectively diagnose and treat medical conditions.



Sidebar:

Important Tests

Even when you feel fine, you may have health problems. Certain diseases, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes, cause few symptoms. In addition to each being serious disorders, these conditions can lead to further complications and health problems.

- Blood pressure should be taken at least once every two years, starting at age 20.
- Cholesterol levels should be checked every five years starting at age 20.
- Diabetes testing should occur consistently if you have risk factors, such as having a family history of the disease, being overweight, having high blood pressure or cholesterol, or heart disease.

Facts:

- > More than 50 percent of men older than 55 have high blood pressure, greatly increasing their odds of having a heart attack or stroke, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- > Approximately 33 percent of men have high cholesterol, doubling their odds of getting heart disease.
- > Diabetes increases the chances of suffering a heart attack and developing hypoglycemia, hypertension, stroke and kidney disease, according to the American Diabetes Association.

About the Author:

Dr. Miranda is board certified in Family Medicine. He is associated with CMA Primary Care–Florence, an affiliate of Carolinas Medical Alliance, and he is on medical staff at Carolinas Hospital System. Dr. Miranda is accepting new patients. To schedule an appointment, please call 843-679-4221.

Sources: heart.org, nhs.uk, cdc.gov/bloodpressure, cdc.gov/Cholesterol, diabetes.org

CHS OPENS CAROLINAS EXPRESS CARE – LAKE CITY

Submitted by Carolinas Hospital System



Pictured: Front Row (l-r): Jon Peter, NP; Diana Collins, NP; Gary Malaer, CEO, Carolinas Hospital System; Lake City Mayor Lovith Anderson Jr.; and Roger K. Kirby, Representative SC Legislative. Back Row (l-r): Benjamin Lamb, M.D.; Ernest Atkinson, M.D.; Albert Mims, M.D.; Richard Ellis, M.D.; and Greg Moore, President, Greater Lake City Chamber of Commerce

Carolinas Hospital System is proud to announce the opening of the new Carolinas Express Care– Lake City, located at 148 Sauls St., Suite E in Lake City. It is conveniently open after hours during the week and on weekends.

- Monday – Friday: 2 - 10 p.m.
- Saturday: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Sunday: Noon – 6 p.m.

When your doctor's office is closed, or you can't wait for an appointment, you can still get the care you need for the flu, a simple fracture and other common ailments. No appointment is necessary. Carolinas Hospital System is committed to the expansion of medical services and technology to meet the health care needs of Lake City and its surrounding communities.

For more information about Carolinas Express Care – Lake City, call 843-699-9183.



UNDERSTANDING DEPRESSION

Submitted by Susan K. Carter, LPC, LPC/S, Director of Performance Improvement and Education/Out-Patient Satellite Clinics Program Manager



Susan K. Carter

Many people describe themselves as “depressed” from time to time, usually referring to brief periods of a low mood prompted by situational setbacks such as having to work late, getting a bad grade in school or a temporary conflict with a friend or family member. Clinical depression, however, can occur independently of situational stressors and can result in multiple negative consequences for

individuals experiencing this serious mental health issue.

A better understanding of some of the types of depression will help us recognize the symptoms of this common, very treatable condition, in ourselves and others. Two of the most common forms of depression are major depression and persistent depressive disorder.

Major depression is present when severe symptoms occur for at least two weeks and they interfere with daily and pleasurable activities. Sleeping too much or very little and overeating or poor appetite are examples of severe symptoms that, if present for several weeks or more, suggest depression. A persistent sad or anxious mood often accompanied by feelings of emptiness, hopelessness, or pessimism are common in depressed individuals. Other feelings frequently expressed include guilt, worthlessness or helplessness. Depression is often marked by a loss of pleasure or interest in activities that used to be pleasurable. Those close to the individual may observe a change in the depressed person’s demeanor, which is often irritable or lethargic. Depression may cause a person to move or talk more slowly, or, on the other hand, to become restless and agitated. Sometimes depressed people have trouble concentrating, remembering information or making decisions.

Persistent depressive disorder (PDD) is a chronic type of depression in which a person is regularly in a low mood (referred to as dysthymia)



although the symptoms are not as severe as in major depression. The main symptom of PDD is a sad or dark mood, at least in a mild form, on most days for at least two years.

Typically, symptoms don’t disappear for more than two months at a time. In addition, major depression episodes may occur before or during persistent depressive disorder. This is sometimes called “double depression.” Individuals with PDD often also report feelings of hopelessness, sleep problems, fatigue and lack of energy, low self-esteem, poor appetite or overeating, and poor concentration. A negative or discouraging view of themselves, their future, other people, and life events is common in people with PDD. Problems often seem hard to solve. Having PDD is linked to a greater risk of suicide.

Depression is seen across the lifespan in both men and women, although women report depression more often than men. This may be due to biological, lifecycle and hormonal factors that are unique to women. Data from the National Health Interview Survey (2010-2013) found that nearly nine percent of U.S. men reported daily feelings of anxiety or depression. However, less than one half of them (41 percent) took medication for these feelings or had recently talked to a mental health professional. Men with depression are more likely to be very tired, irritable and sometimes angry. They may lose interest in work or activities they once enjoyed, have sleep problems, and behave recklessly. Misuse of drugs or alcohol may occur. Many men do not recognize their depression and fail to seek help. Older adults with depression may have less obvious symptoms, or they may be less likely

to admit to feelings of sadness or grief. They are also more likely to have medical conditions such as heart disease, which may cause or contribute to depression.

A 2014 Center for Disease Control (CDC) study found that adults with depression are more likely to be obese than adults without depression. In every age group, women with depression were more likely to be obese than women without depression. The proportion of adults with obesity rose as the severity of depressive symptoms increased.

Chronic stress associated with a lower socio-economic status is correlated with depression as unemployment or minimum wage jobs, substandard housing in unsafe neighborhoods, and limited access to healthcare and insurance promote a sense of helplessness and hopelessness that is inherent in depression.

Many people with depression do not get the help they need, often because they view their symptoms as an inevitable part of life. Children’s depression is often mislabeled as anger or shyness. Young and middle-aged adults blame “the stress of life” for their struggles to function. Older adults’ withdrawal is often attributed to dementia even though the cognitive deficits may actually result from a treatable depression.

Antidepressants treat depression by helping to improve the way the brain uses certain chemicals that control mood or stress. These medications usually take two to four weeks to work, often improving sleep, appetite, and concentration problems before lifting mood.

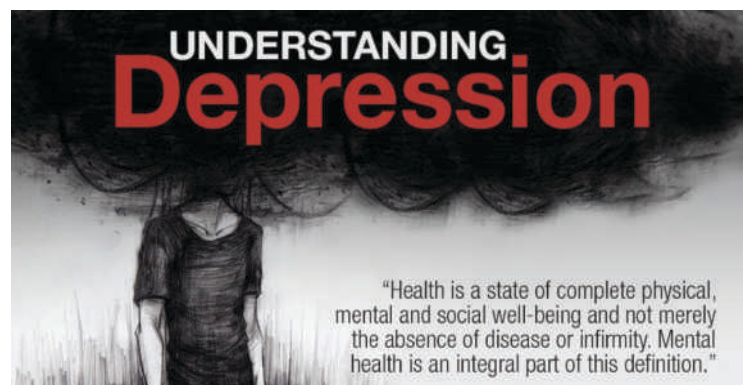
Antidepressants are commonly prescribed but work best in conjunction with psychotherapy. However, this combined treatment is not underused. Although 11 percent of Americans aged 12 years and up take antidepressant medication, less than one third of them taking one antidepressant medication and less than one-half of those taking multiple antidepressants have seen a mental health professional in the past year. This is unfortunate because recovery is faster when both treatments are used. In order to increase the number of people receiving effective treatment for depression, we must reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness.

Effective psychotherapies for helping people with depression include cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and interpersonal therapy (IPT). CBT helps identify and change the negative styles of thinking that promote self-defeating attitudes and behaviors. This evidenced-based therapy also teaches techniques to improve social skills and stress managements and how to unlearn feelings of helplessness. IPT, which helps individuals cope with interpersonal conflicts, grief and loss issues, and stage of life transitions, can be especially effective in the treatment of depression.

Resources

Contact Pee Dee Mental Health at 843-317-4073 for more information and/or to request an appointment for an assessment. Walk-in referrals are also accepted. Our address is 125 E. Cheves St., Florence, SC 29506.

Individual, family, and group therapy is provided using evidenced-based treatments including cognitive-behavioral therapy for depression and other mental health disorders.



ARTHENIUS JACKSON STEPS FORWARD TO TRANSFORM LIVES

by Mallory Brayboy



Arthenius Jackson

One in five girls and one in 20 boys fall victim to child sexual abuse according to studies by David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes Against Children Research Center. Child sexual abuse is not solely restricted to physical contact, but can include non-contact abuse, such as exposure, voyeurism and child pornography. Studies also show that the majority of the perpetrators in child sexual abuse cases are known to the victim, with

34 percent of them being relatives. The effects of child sexual abuse leave long-lasting effects on the victim's mental and physical health. Arthenius Jackson of Hartsville is a survivor of sexual abuse who withheld her devastating secret for many years but now bravely speaks out on the issue that plagues thousands of innocent individuals.

Her story involves being molested at the age of six by a family member. The abuse continued until her teenage years. "It was tough. It's hard to believe that I went through it. During that time...I don't know how to describe it," she says. Jackson suffered privately both mentally and emotionally in several aspects of life, yet remained silent about the offense for 20 years. While withholding the revelation from her family, Jackson would privately visit a counselor in Lamar. It wasn't until she reached a breaking point while talking with her mentor that she revealed it. "My mentor told me that had a lot to do with my life. Everything was interfered with because of what happened. I didn't know that's where it was stemming from," she says.

Jackson finally opened up to her family about the sexual abuse in 2013 at age 26. "My family was shocked and had no idea. I just didn't know how to say it." The following year, Jackson launched One Touch Transformation (OTT), a nonprofit organization that raises awareness about sexual abuse and supports other organizations that stand against it. "After I finished counseling, I wanted more. So that's what



One Touch Transformation Organization raises awareness for sexual abuse

kind of prompted me to start OTT. It gave me a way to share my story as well as help others share their story," says Jackson. "It brought healing to myself as well. The more I talked about it, the better it became." This free service for adult survivors of sexual abuse features three stages of counseling and care. The organization holds an annual community event during the month of April, Sexual Assault Awareness Month. "We have a candlelight vigil ceremony on Friday and a family fun day with other survivors, singers, musicians--a comfortable day so you won't be sad about what happened," explains Jackson. Another aspect of the nonprofit is Healthy Mind, Healthy Body. "Coming from survivors, when your mind is affected, your body is usually affected as well," she says. Healthy Mind, Healthy Body will begin implementing free health screenings for blood pressure, diabetes and HIV this fall.

A love for children inspired Jackson to continue her activist efforts with the launch of The Butterfly Effect mentoring program in 2016. The program is a 12-week mentoring program for females ages six through 15 covering topics including self-respect, self-worth, good touch/bad touch, human trafficking, Internet safety, and more. "Growing up in this technological world, you can never be so careful," says Jackson. The program, initially offered only to black girls, will be extended to all races upon its revival this fall. "I wanted them to see someone like me, but at the same time my heart goes out to all children," says Jackson.



Fluttering Thoughts Chat

As a victim of sexual abuse, speaking out on the issue and aiding others gives Jackson a sense of empowerment, confidence and pride that was once stripped from her. She shares her story at various churches and gives educational presentations informing children on factors such as "why we wear clothes in certain areas" and "who's supposed to touch our bodies and who's not." Jackson also introduced RAINN Day to the Francis Marion University campus in 2013 while serving as the advisor to Praise in Motion student dance team. RAINN (Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network) is the nation's largest anti-sexual assault violence organization. The organization carries out programs to prevent sexual violence, help victims, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.

Jackson's advice to victims of sexual abuse is to talk to someone you can trust and confide in. She then advises to seek professional help when you are ready. "Some people are against counselors or therapists, but they're here to help!" says Jackson. "You can choose what type of counselor you see. Faith-based/non-faith based for example." Some factors Jackson says cause victims to remain silent are feeling ashamed or embarrassed, thinking they've done something wrong, or fearing no one will believe them. Much of it also depends on when the abuse occurred or who the perpetrator was. Jackson describes revealing her abuse as "one of the hardest things I've ever had to do" due to concerns about how it would affect her family. Through both receiving and providing guidance, Jackson has gained peace, yet the incident still leaves a scar on the family. She is still unable to discuss the disheartening situation with her father or older brothers.

"My mom is the only one who's comfortable enough to talk to me about it," she says. "It's been a long process, but it's so much better now."

There are simple actions parents can take to help prevent or stop child sexual abuse. Jackson advises that parents: have the conversation with them early about good touches and bad touches. Refrain from making children hug individuals whom they don't want to hug. Watch their behavior. If it changes suddenly, then you know something has happened. And last, ask them plainly, "Has anyone ever touched you in your private areas?" Jackson says to make the conversation comfortable for them. "The more comfortable they are, the easier it is for them to talk to you about stuff like that. Nowadays a lot of people don't want to have that conversation with their children."

The mission of One Touch Transformation is to educate the community about sexual abuse and to empower and encourage all sexual abuse victims and survivors. Jackson says the name was chosen because "it was a touch that caused me to go through all of this, but if it wasn't for that touch then I wouldn't be who I am today. The touch transformed my life and made me who I am, and I want to transform other lives."

You can learn more about One Touch Transformation by visiting www.Onett.me and following the organization on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



UNLOCK THE SECRET TO HEALTHY AGING



You're still just as active as you were in your thirties and forties, but as you continue to add those candles to your birthday cake each year, you can feel the effects of aging starting to take a toll on your body. As you age, your body needs a little extra care to maintain optimal health. That's why you go for your morning walk and eat a balanced diet. These things can help you support your overall well-being, but there are other factors to consider if you want to live a healthier, more active lifestyle as you grow older.

Many people don't realize how much of an impact hormone, heart, and bone and joint health can have on their day-to-day lives. To maintain this ideal lifestyle, here are ways you can support your health in each of these key areas:

Supporting your hormone health*

Properly balanced hormone levels are one of the most important factors when it comes to staying healthy as you age. Healthy hormone levels support healthy sexual function, body weight, sleep and glucose metabolism. When your hormones are imbalanced, you could experience fatigue, weakness and muscle loss, and may even find daily activities difficult to complete.

Establishing a healthy diet, ensuring sufficient sleep and making time for recreation are great first steps toward supporting your hormone health. It is also important to consult your healthcare provider to discuss regular blood work to monitor your hormone levels.

Finally, to help maintain healthy glucose metabolism and tissues,

add a nutritional supplement, such as Wobenzym Plus, to your daily regimen.*

Paying special attention to your strongest muscle

Heart health is an important part of any healthy aging plan. You're already monitoring your lipid profile diligently, but what else can you do?

Lipid levels are important, but maintaining glucose homeostasis and cytokine balance is just as important to supporting proper heart health.

A healthy diet that focuses on fiber and regulates carbohydrate intake has been proven to support healthy glucose levels. Consider complementing your diet with regular exercise and nutritional supplements to further support good health.*

Healthy advice for the things that move you

Maintaining healthy bone and joint function is critical for both men and women. When bones are weak or joints are stiff, it can be difficult to keep up your desired level of activity.

Bone health is directly impacted by vitamin D levels. To support these function areas, boost vitamin D by spending brief periods of time in the sun - with sun protection, of course - or consult your healthcare provider about taking a supplement to achieve optimum vitamin D levels.* Additionally, adding a nutritional supplement such as Wobenzym Plus can help provide temporary relief from everyday aches and pains to ensure that when you want to be active, your bones and joints are ready to keep up with you.*

Take the first step to support your health today

A balanced diet and moderate exercise are the building blocks of any health regimen, but as the years pass, your body may need additional support. Remember your hormones, heart, bones and joints when tailoring your health plan and consult your healthcare provider before introducing any new products into your routine.



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PROPER NUTRITION IS KEY TO SENIOR HEALTH



Americans are now living longer than ever before. In fact, one of the fastest growing segments is people over the age of 85 who will represent 20 percent of the population by the year 2040. Because we are living longer, certain conditions specific to seniors are also on a steady

rise. Dehydration, falls, fractures, cognition loss and attention deficits are now becoming more commonplace.

In a recent paper titled “Salt Appetite Across Generations” presented at a medical conference, researchers indicated that among seniors, a reduced sense of thirst could increase the increased risk of serious dehydration. They also noted that the appetite for salt does not diminish with age, and suggested that this could be used to help sustain hydration and prevent the dangerous symptoms that result from dehydration.

Another study published in the American Journal of Hypertension identified significant risks to cardiovascular health and longevity from consuming any less than one, or more than three teaspoons of salt



per day. Fortunately, most Americans, including seniors, when left the choice consume right in the middle of this range.

Low salt diets can also cause seniors to suffer from mild hyponatremia, an electrolyte imbalance in the blood which may not sound bad but can lead directly to walking impairment; attention deficits; and a much higher frequency of falls. Several recent medical papers found a direct relationship between hyponatremia and unsteadiness, falls, bone fractures and attention deficits.

Falls are one of the most serious problems for the elderly and about a third of people over 65 fall at least once every year. Fall-related injuries in the elderly are associated with numerous psychological and physical consequences and are a leading cause of bone breakage and hip fractures, which can lead to complications and permanent disability or death. Some seniors do need a low salt diets, but many do not, and it should not be



assumed that they all do or benefit from when in fact the opposite may be the case.



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LOOKING FOR LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE?



Unlike most types of insurance (which you buy in order to provide for you in the case of a financial hardship), you buy life insurance to provide for someone else in the case you are gone.

This means the first question in determining if you need life insurance over 50 is determining who is financially dependent on

you. Then you must determine what amount of money would be sufficient to replace what you are currently providing for them.

Who is Financially Dependent on You?

Financial dependents may include a spouse, children, parents or a sibling that you provide for financially. Figure out how much financial support you provide for them. What would they do if you were gone? You can buy a life insurance policy and name multiple beneficiaries, thereby providing a specific amount to several people without having to buy multiple life insurance policies.

If there is no one financially dependent on you, you may still want life insurance because you desire to provide for someone. For example, some parents desire to pay a monthly or annual premium so they know a set amount will be paid to their children upon their death. Other parents figure the kids will get whatever is left, and that will be sufficient. It is a personal choice.

Can You Get Life Insurance Over 50?

To get life insurance you must go through underwriting. This process involves answering health questions and usually also requires a nurse to do a physical exam. If you are in great health, going through underwriting should be no problem. If you are over 50, a smoker, and/or have moderate health troubles, you may be able to get life insurance

but you will have to pay more for it than a healthier person or a non-smoker would.

How Much Life Insurance Do You Need?

Determining the right amount of life insurance will be important. The more you buy, the more it will cost. Get help to determine if you need life insurance, and if so, the right amount. Life insurance should fit into your overall financial plan and be designed to help you accomplish your goals and objectives, including the goal of providing for loved ones when you are gone.

What Type of Life Insurance Should You Buy?

There are many types of life insurance. Most life insurance can be grouped into two main categories: term life insurance or cash value life insurance.

Term life functions much like other forms of insurance. You have an annual premium, and as long as you pay it, you have life insurance. Just like other forms of insurance, there is not cash value attached to a term life insurance policy.

With cash value life insurance a portion of the premium you pay goes to cover the cost of insurance and a portion goes toward a savings account.

Cash value life insurance comes in many forms, such as whole life insurance, universal life and variable universal life. Each type will have different guidelines that apply to what your cash value is invested in and when and how you can access it.

Term insurance is good for temporary needs, such as providing for your kid's college or paying off a mortgage. Once the kids are through college, or the mortgage is paid off, you don't need that life insurance any more, so you cancel it.

Some people buy life insurance on their parents as an investment. This may sound morbid or inappropriate, but it can also be an effective strategy as life insurance is a guaranteed payout.

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CITY CENTER FARMERS MARKET ON A MISSION

Submitted by Jennie Pezé, Florence Local Foods Initiative



Every week more people exclaim over how much more there is to see and do in downtown Florence. As part of the City's dramatic downtown revitalization, City Center Farmers Market has sprung up and flourished as a favorite food and artisan market for local producers and residents alike. The market is located under tents in the Cheves Street parking lot of the City Center administration building where vendors and customers have gathered every

Saturday since April of 2016. Launched as a temporary location, the market is becoming a beloved destination in the city. The number of vendors has tripled from last year, the season has extended to year-round, and designs are in the works for a permanent structure just a few blocks away.

City Center Farmers Market has a mission, not only to add to downtown's charm, but more specifically, to also provide a venue for entrepreneurs and to improve access to fresh food in this area of town once deemed a "Food Desert." The market is easily accessible, has extensive parking and is located close to residential areas and public transportation stops. Recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) dollars enjoy the extra benefit of qualifying for the Healthy Bucks program, which gives patrons more buying power for purchasing fruits and vegetables.



Vegetables

The quality of the offerings at City Center Farmers market is high. Market

customers can shop for locally grown goods, low-pesticide produce, and organic fruits and vegetables, as well as meats, eggs, and dairy products, baked goods, handmade pasta, and even pet foods, often finding items not sold in area grocery stores. For example, Teresa at Brooklyn South Deli makes lasagnas with fresh pasta and her own secret-recipe tomato sauce. Charlie Caldwell from Ovis Hill Farm has lamb, beef, chicken and pork all pasture-raised locally and processed in certified humane facilities. Jan Mosier at Lulu's Barkery cooks up dog treats for our four-legged friends every week, and occasional vendors bring goodies like Swiss pretzel bread, ice cream, honey and other specialty items. Heather Solomon, owner of Fisher Road Honey and Oils and a regular vendor, said, "The new customers are always surprised and delighted to see that our market offers a little bit of everything!"

Expertise is another valuable benefit that producer-focused markets offer to their patrons. The actual farmer who grew the vegetables, the baker who made the bread, or the artisan who made the craft are onsite. People like these really know their products. Indeed, producers are a rich source of information about the value of what they sell – explaining the connections among buying locally produced goods and the benefits to personal health and to the local economy. Speak to a farmer and learn about the heightened nutritional value of vegetables that have only been picked hours before the market opens. Talk to a



Victoria Kasper Basket of Bread

soap maker about the benefits of goats milk soap or beeswax-based products. Find the honey vendor and get a profound understanding of bee culture and honey's health benefits. Joyce Edwards, who makes fresh sourdough breads and sweet rolls for sale at her Breads 'n Threads tent, remarked, "This market has been a great opportunity for small businesses to get their product out to the community. I talk with new customers every week; It amazes me how so many are still just finding us each week. Our regulars are loving the fresh variety provided locally and enjoy coming in to visit with all the vendors."



Bee Hive demonstration

Also, City Center Farmer Market offers breakfast and lunch cooked to order from Tracks Café using the freshest market ingredients. The market setting is pet-friendly (on a leash, please) and provides games and a "makers' space" for children to color and draw while their parents shop.



Main Farmers

Edwards said something that market organizers have heard multiple times: "I have yet to see an unhappy shopper at the Florence City Farmers Market. This place puts a smile on my face every Saturday."

The market is a City-hosted event and is open year-round on Saturday mornings from 9am-1pm.

The address is 369 West Cheves St. between Coit and McQueen Streets and across the street from the Florence-Darlington Technical College parking garage. More information is available on the market's Facebook page or through this contact information: 843-665-2047 or jpeze@cityofflorence.com. Interested vendors may download applications from florencedowntown.com/citycenterfarmersmarket.



M&L PREMIUM VALET BRINGS ELEGANCE TO THE AREA

by Anna Bowman



Kevin and Angel McKoy

Kevin and Angel McKoy recently celebrated the one-year anniversary of their business, M&L Premium Valet, LLC. The idea for their valet business came about while the couple was on vacation and was introduced to the unique service.

Kevin McKoy recalls, "We were out of town and decided to go to dinner at a local calabash place at the beach. To our surprise the calabash restaurant had a valet service, which we enjoy. At that moment, we said, 'Florence does not have a valet type of service,' and thus our company was born. When we use a valet service it leaves out the frustration of trying to find a parking space. Using a valet helps make the evening special and adds a little elegance to a romantic evening."

The experience proved to be life-changing for the couple, and soon they were the ones offering the impeccable valet services to their clients in the Pee Dee area. "Currently our services are offered in Florence, but we plan to expand throughout the Pee Dee region and into other parts of the state, such as Greenville, Charleston, and Columbia," said Kevin McKoy.

Using their own experience with other valet services as their foundation, the McKoys have created the ultimate valet experience for their clients. "Most people when they think of valet service, they think only about parking and retrieving cars." But Angel McKoy knows that there is so much more to their business: "We know that in most cases, our valet employees will be the first point-of-contact with their clients' guests. Therefore, we must stay focus on the needs of everyone we encounter while working with attendees at an event," she explained, adding that "our clients entrust us to greet every guest with a warm smile, while ensuring

them that their vehicle will be taken care of with proper care. If we don't make guests attending an event feel special, clients won't book our company for future events. 'Word of Mouth,' marketing can make or break a company, especially a new company like ours," she said.

M&L Premium LLC, is available to provide valet services for all events: weddings, private events, business events, special services, sporting events, corporate events, restaurants and residential events, regardless of the size or whether attendees drive vehicles or even motorcycles. The company hires only the best employees, and all employees go through a rigorous background check, including drug screening and Motor Vehicle Report check. "After employees are hired, they go through a training session where they are trained to become experts in offering the best valet service." The company's employees are fully bonded, and they request two weeks' notice prior to an event and require up to a week notification for cancellation of their service agreement prior to a booked event."



M&L PREMIUM VALET

Kevin McKoy, a veteran of the United States Marine Corps, is a Florence native who graduated from Wilson High School. He studied at the School of Communication Arts in Raleigh, N.C., and received his degree in marketing from Florence-

Darlington Technical College and is currently a student at Coker College, where he will receive a Bachelor in Business Management in December. Angel McKoy, formerly of Plainfield, N.J., is a graduate of South Florence High School, and she is the recipient of several certifications in childhood development. She has been in the public-school system for the past 15 years. The couple has two sons, Kaiden and Ashton.

The McKoy's look forward to another successful year, serving the Pee Dee area, and can be contacted via phone at 843-413-3219 or via email for a bid quote at mandlpremiumvalet@gmail.com.

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YOUNG WOMAN CLIMBING HER LADDER OF SUCCESS

by Kim Williams



Monique Maxwell

Monique Maxwell is steadily working to become someone her young daughter can grow up to admire and pattern her life after. What Maxwell may not have realized is how she is an inspiration to many of her colleagues as well.

Those working alongside Maxwell seem to be in agreement of her character and work ethic. Consistently present, willing to help no matter the day or time, super friendly to everyone, and always smiling were just a few of the attributes they recognized in their facilities manager at the Holiday Inn Express.

Maxwell credits several people who have aided her on this journey so far. Her former boss and mentor, Terry Bess, director of sales of the Hampton Inn and Suites-North helped to expand and edify her sales, customer service platform and management skills. She recalls how her mother and father encouraged her growing up, supporting her various middle and high school activities. Maxwell's busy schedule allowed her the opportunity to begin to develop time management skills. She also learned how to not let anyone prevent her from reaching her goals. Her positive attitude, paired with hard work and education, has allowed her to grow and advance in her career and to be noticed by supervisors in the field.

Although she is originally



from Charleston, she graduated high school in 2008 and came to Florence for college. Afterwards, she came to work for the Raldex Hospitality Group, which consists of Holiday Inn Express and Suites, Hilton Garden Inn and two local Hampton Inn & Suites. She first started as a front desk

clerk. It was at this entry level job that she shone like a star, excelling at her job and began to be recognized by supervisors. Over time, she became a sales and events coordinator, where she continued to put in time and hard work. Management continued to recognize her potential and offered her the position she currently holds as facilities manager. This was such an honor because she is currently the only African American female to hold a position like this in the entire Raldex Hospitality Group. Maxwell is extremely proud and thankful of where this journey has led her thus far, and she has dreams of advancing more and possibly becoming a president of some company. She knows that the sky is the limit, and she will continue to climb the ladder upwards.

If you'd like the opportunity to see Ms. Maxwell in action, you must stop by the beautiful Holiday Inn Express. Just last year, they earned the Torchbearer award, which recognized their consistent high level of excellence and guest satisfaction scores, ranking them as one of the top five percent of Holiday Inn Express and Suites in the country, by their guests. There are many beautiful upgrades and renovations that continue to impress visitors daily. Stop by and stay awhile. You'll be so glad you did.



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OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY DONATES TO PEE DEE COALITION

Submitted by Kathy Andrews, Director of Communications-Community Education



Photo-from left to right: Brenda Dixon- vice president Marlboro County Pee Dee Coalition Board; Herbert Washington-Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; Janice Rozier, president-Marlboro County Pee Dee Coalition Board; Curtis J. McIver-Omega Psi Phi Fraternity; Basileus Rev. James E. Smith Omega Psi Phi; and Mackenzie Clementson Marlboro Volunteer Coordinator

The men of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. stepped their way into Pee Dee Coalition's Bennettsville shelter and made a donation of \$1,000.

"It's really important to us, and we are trying our best to set an image, and influence the community to do the right thing, especially men," said Omega Psi member Basileus Rev. James E. Smith.

"We need support for this very important cause," said fraternity member Herbert

Washington. "I'm glad, and it's uplifting."

"It's important to try to get the men to know they can make a difference in domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse prevention," said Brenda Dixon, vice chairperson of Marlboro County's Pee Dee Coalition Board. "The problem in our community is massive and in the entire state of SC."



"We have to reach men and this is just one positive thing we can do that is meaningful and very much needed," said fraternity member Curtis J. McIver. "Men can't sit on the sidelines as domestic violence persists. We must educate our brothers about what it means to truly value women."

Omega Psi Phi is a Black Greek Letter international organization with 750 chapters. It was founded at Howard University in 1910 in

Washington, D.C. Omega Psi Phi is attributed to the principles of scholarship, manhood, perseverance and uplift.



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SUCCESS IS YOUR BIRTHRIGHT

by Anna Bowman



R. Stanton Tucker

HARTSVILLE - It has been said that everyone has a God-given talent, and R. Stanton Tucker is a shining example of the gifts that God wants to bestow upon us when we begin to listen and understand the direction he wants to take our lives in his honor. As a first-time author, Tucker's debut novel, "Success Is Your Birthright: God's Success," would take five years from vision to completion. See, for Tucker, it was never a race to just write a novel to see his name appear

on bookshelves across the country. He was destined by God to write a powerful and poignant novel, addressing issues of great concern, which the author describes as our "fading humanity."

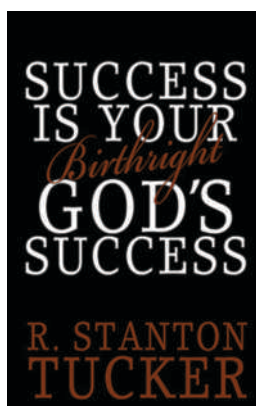
Tucker explains of his incredible journey to becoming a published author, "I had no intentions to write, 'Success Is Your Birthright: God's Success.' It was birthed from my quest for a deeper spiritual relationship with God," he said. "Truthfully, I cannot take full credit for this book. My role was as God's secretary. This is 'His' message to address our fading humanity," said Tucker. The novel is categorized as Christian genre, but he says that the book is written for everyone. And indeed it is. Tucker stated, "Every believer has a past and every non-believer has a future!"

It's not often that you describe a Christian novel as a page-turner, but this is the masterpiece that Tucker has accomplished with his novel. He writes in a voice that illustrates an extraordinary compassion for his fellowman, which forces readers to stop and take a deep breath as they begin to visualize the author's account of how we see one another in a world that seems to value riches over compassion.

The novel uses the familiar biblical story of Joseph and his brothers to showcase how we can triumph after encountering overwhelming adversities. When asked why he used the biblical Joseph story as a platform for his book, Tucker stated, "Joseph's story mirrors our own. He, too, experienced life's roller coaster. Joseph's story is not just a testament to resilience, but one of faith in and reliance on God."

However, the book doesn't shy away from some very critical issues that Tucker feels need to be addressed in today's society. One issue he discusses is witnessing members of a congregation attempting to rush to the altar with a monetary offering in an attempt to "buy" a blessing from God by sacrificing their utility bill, mortgage, rent and even their grocery allocation. Tucker is quick to point out in his book, "God's blessings cannot be doled out or manipulated, definitely not by placing an obstacle like a dollar amount to be blessed. Imagine the rejection and disappointment of those who did not have the requested amount, their wondering and wanting. Based on this, we are led to believe God only looks out for those who have it, not those who need it. God is not, nor is His word, a hustle." There is just no way in which someone can read this book and not feel a great sense of positivity and love for your fellowman.

So who is this man who was predestined by God to write a book so compelling that people are flooding the Internet with overwhelming support and awesome reviews for his debut novel? R. Stanton Tucker is a husband to a beautiful, supportive wife and the father of five amazing



children. He is quick to point out that he does not have any seminary training, but neither did the prophets nor other men and women like them. But, he has been raised in church since the tender age of eight years old, and when God took the time to speak to him, he took the time to listen and act upon God's request for his life.

The book "Success Is Your Birthright: God's Success" is available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other online stores, in hardback, paperback and e-book formats. To access more information about "Success Is Your Birthright: God's Success," visit <http://christellestantonlillie.com>. The author, R.

Stanton Tucker is available to discuss his book with readers and can be reached via email at rstantontucker@yahoo.com or by visiting him on Facebook.

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Florence, SC 29506

Friday Night 7:00 pm
Jamestown Play
Chapman Auditorium at
Francis Marion University

Saturday Morning July 29, 2017
9:30am - 3:30pm
Celebration of Jamestown
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Florence, SC 29506

Saturday Night 7:00pm
Banquet at
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Sunday July 30, 2017
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