

DIVERSITYWORKS

OCTOBER 2018 VOLUME 8 ISSUE 4

"For All of Us"



INTERSECTING
AT MATCHING DESTINATIONS

FOR THE BETTERMENT
OF THE COMMUNITY

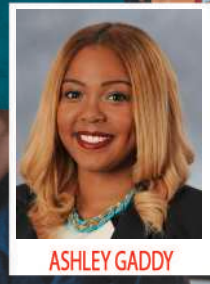
CCU WELCOMES
ASHLEY GADDY

CHS WELCOMES
NEW PHYSICIANS

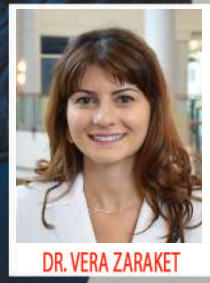
THOROUGHFARE
RENAMED HEYWARD DRIVE



PETE MAZZARONI



ASHLEY GADDY



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DR. JOSEPH E. HEYWARD

COVER STORY:

ANGEL WILLIAMS & LANCE WILSON, RUIZ FOODS

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for making our
20 years
of Production
Successful!**



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MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

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

Spanish Version

Translated by: Yadira Santiago, MA

NUESTRA MISIÓN

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

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

NUESTRA VISIÓN

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

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PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE



*Diana M. Murphy
CEO/Publisher*

We have completed another year, now celebrating seven in all. Wow... how time flies. We would like to thank our partners for their engagement, sharing of their stories, advertising and continuous support. To the readers who eagerly wait to receive their quarterly copies, please accept our appreciation for your unwavering kindness and loyalty to making Diversity Works© possible. To the magazine team, I can't thank you enough for an excellent job this year--for you giving of your time and the energy you put into writing such great articles for our readers to enjoy. The designer for your creativity and the editor for your expertise. I appreciate you all. As we come to the end of another year I can happily say we are still seeing progress through partnership. More companies and the communities are showing their support of diversity, appreciating each other and being more inclusive, and it's just wonderful. As always, please take the time to read another AWESOME edition of Diversity Works© Magazine. And until next year, remember, "We Are Stronger Together." So let's work to cultivate positive relationships.

FROM THE EDITOR'S HEART

LET'S KEEP ON LIVING!



*Dawn "D.A." Goodwin
Interim Editor*

I've been asked so many times how I'm "always happy." That's not my reality though. I don't think it is possible to "always" be happy, but it is possible to always strive to be and to keep a positive attitude. There's just something about a sincere smile and positive attitude that can make anyone feel better, although you might not even know the sadness behind that smile.

When I lost a close friend in July, I was totally stunned. Death had never hit me so closely or suddenly before. And when my friend's mom asked that I be

a flower girl at his funeral because "it was what he would have wanted," I was terrified. I just knew I'd pass out in that church. But thank God, I didn't. And although the loss of my dear friend is still fresh and almost unfathomable to me, I realize that I have to continue living and smiling. It's another thing that he would have wanted.

So while my friend's death stunned me, Hurricane Florence and the flooding it caused truly had me on edge. But most of all, the recent tragedy here in Florence that left one brave police officer dead and six others injured really awakened me and the nation. We at Diversity Works Magazine© pray for a speedy recovery for those injured and will forever honor the life and legacy of Officer Terrence Carraway.

It has been encouraging to see so many members of our community uniting and embracing one another after this tragedy. But it takes more. We need every member of our community to do this and to start now, remembering that some people are out here trying to "live their best lives" while some might be out here simply trying to live.

So that's why this magazine is of such significance. As you strive to live a better life, we want to help you do just that by bringing you the stories of people who have been in your shoes and have conquered life's challenges. Robin L. Lewis offers uplifting spiritual advice. Then Jennifer Robinson talks with Chief Kip Coker of the Lake City Police Department and Stephany Snowden, their city administrator, about their accomplishments over the past two years. Robinson also speaks with a doctor who dispels rumors about mental health. You don't want to miss that story.

Keep reading for additional health-related news from McLeod, Carolinas Hospital System, Keystone Healthcare, to name a few. Join us as we celebrate with Women In Philanthropy on its tenth anniversary, and be ready to learn about local nonprofits when #GivingTuesday returns for its second year. Find out who has been named the 2018 Woman of Achievement by the Darlington County School District. In other

education news, catch up with FDTC, FMU, Marion County Schools, the Lee County School District and more.

In business news, Dr. John D'Ambrosio, CEO of the Better Business Bureau (BBB) of Coastal Carolina, breaks down why the BBB is more relevant today than ever before. Companies can also learn how to cultivate diversity in the workplace by reading on and even by looking at the best practices of other companies.

It has to be an amazing feeling to know that the company you work for recognizes your hard work and the effort you put into helping drive the business to success. In this issue, I bring a cover story featuring Angel Williams and Lance Wilson, two supervisors at Ruiz Foods who let you know how you, too, can climb through the ranks to success.

In this issue our amazing writers like Tory White, Angela Crosland, Kim Williams, Les Echols, Mallory Brayboy, and Chinel Boateng bring to you several heart-wrenching stories that will motivate you and those around you. We also stand in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, National Adoption Month, National Family Caregivers Month and more.

Adaila Ellis discusses how Pete Mazzaroni and the Marion County Healthcare Foundation work for the betterment of the community and gives Teresa Gerrald of Raldex the floor. Wait until you find out what makes her stand out so at Raldex. For National Disability Awareness Month, IMPACT SC's Jonathan Pringle discusses how the group advocates for individuals with disabilities. Then learn about how award-winning artist Barbara Grant isn't allowing her disability to hinder her. We recognize LGBTQ Awareness as Ta'Meeka Epps has Steven C. Sims of Francis Marion speaking on behalf of minorities within a minority. Epps also catches up with the Raldex VP as well as Honda to find out how it demonstrates respect for all individuals.

Meet the Diversity Focus Training (DFT) presenter and facilitator, and the owners of a trendy clothing store in a neighborhood probably near you. Check in with Anderson Bros Bank, First Bank, and New York Life so that you can have your finances in order. That way you can reward yourself for working so hard every day by checking out local events like the Pecan Festival or by heading out to be uplifted by the play For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide. A New York Times bestselling author will soon headline FMU's Pee Dee Fiction and Poetry Festival, so keep flipping for details.

As you read on and find so many more articles, I hope that you see this issue as a friendly reminder to cherish your life and that of others. Thank you for being such dedicated readers, still riding through this journey called life with us. Oh, and as always, enjoy.

Reach me at dagoodwin.com, youreditingpro.net, or follow @d.a.goodwin on Instagram and Dawn Goodwin on Facebook. I would love to hear from you!



BBB IS MORE RELEVANT TODAY THAN EVER

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



Dr. John D'Ambrosio

CONWAY-In a world filled with so many mixed messages from radio, TV, billboards and social media, it can be very confusing to know what is real and what isn't. However, there is one source that has been around for more than 100 years to help you decipher those messages. It's the Better Business Bureau, and today it is more important than ever to have a trusted source that you can turn to for information. The services provided by the Better Business Bureau give consumers the

needed tools to be better informed and the standards that businesses need to use to prosper.

Known simply as the BBB, this is a trusted marketplace where consumers and businesses thrive. For you, the consumer, the BBB helps by providing information about a company and provides you with information so that intelligent buying decisions can be made.

You will find a treasure cove of information at www.bbb.org. The updated BBB website makes it convenient to research businesses and find the information you need. There are reviews of area businesses based on the experiences of their customers, which may be positive or negative. You can also read about complaints that may have been filed against a business as well as the response from that business.

Both accredited and non-accredited businesses will be listed. Most importantly, it easy to see if a specific business is BBB Accredited. The BBB Seal will be prominent beside the business listing, letting you know that this business has agreed to the BBB's Eight Standards of Trust, including sound selling and good customer service, honest advertising and a commitment to make a good faith effort to resolve consumer complaints.

Each business also has a rating. BBB assigns ratings from A+ (highest) to F (lowest). In some cases, BBB will not rate the business (indicated by an NR, or "No Rating") for reasons that include insufficient information about a business or ongoing review/update of the business's file.



As a consumer, you need to be very aware of scams in the marketplace. Unfortunately, scams are very prevalent and a damaging component in today's world. BBB provides you with information about scams and the latest tricks being used to hurt you. We show you how to protect yourself against scams and how to protect your identity from being stolen. BBB Scam Tracker (www.bbb.org/scamtracker) is a resource that allows you to tell your story about being scammed, as well as see what scams are happening around the U.S. and Canada. These reports help BBB to investigate and warn others.

As a business owner, you want to provide the best services possible to your customers. And you need to be a step above your competition. That's not always easy to do. But by applying for and receiving accreditation by the BBB, you are setting yourself up for an additional level of quality performance. The BBB Standards for Trust that you agreed to abide by exist so that consumers know your business is trustworthy. And while businesses are not under any obligation to be accredited, your BBB Accreditation shows everyone, consumer and competition, that as for your business, you met the BBB's accreditation standards.

BBB doesn't compare businesses against each other. Instead, businesses are evaluated against our standards. And these standards speak clearly to the competence and to the character of this organization. BBB is an unbiased source that businesses and consumers alike trust in today's marketplace.

One other thing you should also know, the BBB is not a government agency. We do not receive any state or federal funding. We are an advocate for consumers and ethical businesses, as well as a third-party mediator when there are disputes between customers and companies. We are dedicated to fostering honest and responsive relationships between business and consumers.

The BBB of Coastal Carolina serves a region of 15 counties in South Carolina and North Carolina. We are here to help you--both the consumer and the business owner. Reach out to us, and you'll see why we are more relevant today than ever.

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



CHALLENGES, BENEFITS, AND BEST PRACTICES FOR CULTIVATING DIVERSITY



Talk of diversity in the workplace is nothing new, but as more individuals, organizations, and politicians speak about feminism, immigration, gender identity and the gender pay gap, it is coming to the forefront of business news once again. Additionally, studies are showing

that the more diverse a workplace is, the more success it achieves, and organizations are looking to learn more about how to increase diversity and manage diversity.

Diversity is a prominent challenge facing businesses today. Most employers are aware that diversity in the workplace is important, yet many don't realize that their workforce isn't as diverse as they believe it to be – or as diverse as it could be.

1. Diversity in the Workplace: Benefits, Challenges and Solutions
Three key points of Diversity in the Workplace: Benefits, Challenges and Solutions:

- An organization's success and competitiveness often depend upon its ability to embrace diversity and realize its benefits
- Organizations should actively assess their handling of workplace diversity issues
- Organizations must work to overcome perceptual, cultural and language barriers for their diversity programs to succeed

2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Diversity in Workplace

Three key points of Advantages and Disadvantages of Diversity in Workplace:

- Workers with diverse cultural backgrounds have unique experiences and perceptions that strengthen productivity
- Properly managed diversity makes it possible to leverage the strengths of employees and complement their weaknesses

- Diversity can strengthen relationships with customers by making communication more effective

3. The Myriad Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace

Three key points of The Myriad Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace:

- Companies that employ workers who identify with a small portion of the market don't have access to the insights, experiences and worldviews of the entire marketplace
- More diverse companies win in innovation and outperform their competitors
- Diverse teams are more creative and are better at solving problems

4. What Are the Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace?

Three key points of What Are the Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace:

- A diverse workplace does not simply hire workers from various age groups and balance its ratio of men to women. Rather, diverse workplaces include people with different experiences, varying personalities and different levels of experience to foster creativity and offer a range of viewpoints and ideas
- Workers from diverse backgrounds offer a selection of different talents and skills that benefit the organization and improve their work performance

- Hiring workers who speak different languages helps companies work on a global basis and interact with a broader customer base

5. Advantages of Cultural Diversity in the Workplace

Three key points of Advantages of Cultural Diversity in the Workplace:

- Companies that manage diversity well incorporate cross-cultural diversity and inclusion training to ensure everyone feels validated and important regardless of his differences
- Proactive companies manage and promote diversity, which improves morale and promotes positivity in the workplace
- Culturally-diverse workplaces empower companies to expand into worldwide markets and better mimic the communities they serve

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

WOMEN IN PHILANTHROPY REJOICES IN TEN YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Submitted by Sarah Shelley, Executive Director



In 2009, the idea behind a new Pee Dee region women's giving circle was both practical and logical: If women pool their financial resources to distribute in grant funding, nonprofit organizations will receive larger grants than if the women donated individually. The giving circle became known as Women in Philanthropy (WIP) and was the first major project of the newly formed Eastern Carolina Community Foundation. The concept behind WIP was that women informed about philanthropy and about needs in their community could collectively make a real difference. Each member was given a voice and a vote in how the funds were directed.

Ten years later, Women in Philanthropy has built a community of thoughtful, effective philanthropists. In the years since its founding, WIP has inspired over 200 members to improve the quality of life for citizens in the Pee Dee. Through 2017, it has granted \$4 million to 43 unique organizations in all seven counties of the Pee Dee. Projects that have received support include dentures for needy clients, an alarm system for a safe house, assistance to senior citizens for daily chores, educational and therapy camp for multi-handicapped non-mobile

children, kitchen up-dates for a soup kitchen, and backpack lunches for school-age children for weekends.

There should be no surprise that to celebrate its tenth year of supporting Pee Dee nonprofits, Women in Philanthropy decided to double its annual giving objective to \$100,000 so that it could meet the tremendous goal of actually giving away half a million dollars in ten years. On Nov. 2 from 6 – 9 p.m. at the Lucas Farm in Florence, WIP will host a major celebration to award its 2018 grants and reach the milestone of distributing half a million dollars in ten years to nonprofits throughout the Pee Dee.

For sure the party will be fun. There will be delicious southern food and signature drinks. Men, women and children are all invited, BUT nothing beats the satisfaction of knowing that over ten years, hundreds of thousands of dollars have improved the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of Pee Dee residents, all from the simple but genuine act of pooling financial resources. The evening will serve as a great reminder of 39 women in 2009 created a synergy of philanthropy that ended up growing to half a million dollars. Thousands and thousands of Pee Dee residents have been touched, thereby, improving the quality of life for all of us.

The public is invited to attend WIP's celebration Fall Back at the Farm on Nov. 2 from 6 – 9 p.m. Tickets are \$50 each and tables for 8 are \$500 each. To purchase, call 843-667-1131.

Eastern Carolina Community Foundation founded in 2008 to improve the quality of life in this area of South Carolina through inspired philanthropy and innovative community programs. The Foundation is a public charity established as a collection of charitable funds built with gifts and bequests from people in eastern South Carolina. For more information, please call 843-667-1131 or visit www.easterncarolinacf.org.



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FIGHTING FOR THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

by Jennifer Robinson



Chief Kip Coker

LAKE CITY - We often place boundaries on what we believe relationships should be and how they should be established. There is no true protocol to relationships, but unfortunately societal labels have been placed on people, and they believe there is a certain framework. The same is true with communal relationships and the connection between those who protect and serve and its residents. The nation has definitely seen its share of reports about law enforcement and its treatment of persons of color in all media outlets. It would leave one to believe that there is a vendetta against

non-whites. This may have validity, but we cannot negate perspective. What is highlighted in media can often lead to strong beliefs that may have personal merit but may not always be factual. There are many who find that the national reports are not indicative of what is occurring in individual communities around the country. This is definitely true in Florence County. Outside of Florence, there is a city that finally has a lake and is changing the law enforcement/citizen dynamic. Have you seen the viral videos that are circulating the community and the nation? These officers and administration of the Lake City Police Department are changing the conversation about law enforcement and their connection to the citizens of their community.

Chief Kip Coker of the Lake City Police Department and Stephany Snowden, city administrator, sat down with Diversity Works to discuss what they have accomplished in Lake City in the past two years. They described their undertaking as large but one that was necessary. Rumors have circulated for years about this city being crime ridden. The downtown that is now thriving was once desolate. In speaking with Snowden, she was very excited about the positive changes that are occurring. She said that in her seven months in Lake City, she has witnessed great improvements in community/law enforcement relations.



When Chief Coker was asked what was the key to dispelling myths about law enforcement, he stated "educating the public." He was glad to speak about how he has listened to members from the community and worked to help them move forward. He stated that he has trained his staff, which includes officers, to be great communicators.



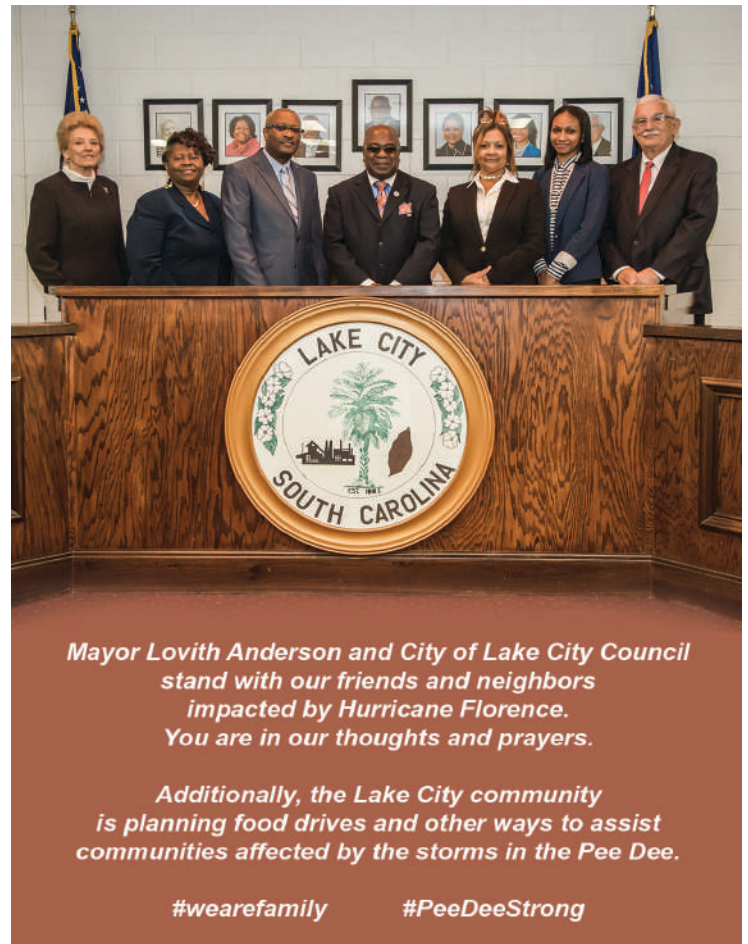
Snowden stated that staff buy in is very important to help ease tensions that made it difficult to meet needs in the past. Because officers are often demonized, their goal is to humanize them. The perfect opportunity came for the Lake City Police Department to showcase their human side in August. It came in the form

of a viral video that showed officers having a dance-off with the children from the local Boys and Girls Club. Another viral video surfaced a few weeks later showing officers lip synching and showing their support for local businesses and the community. Because they showed the softer side of the city, it helped break barriers that were once prevalent in the community.

Chief Coker wants the community to feel comfortable coming to him and his staff to share their concerns. What he does not want to negate is that they are there to enforce the law, but he will never take their dignity. His legacy is to leave the community in a better way than he found it and to ensure that the next person moves forward with his vision and makes it his or her own. His formula for crime prevention is working for Lake City, and we know that under the leadership of Kipp Coker, the future is bright.



Please donate to the Lake City Police Department Youth Fund. This fund is used for fun activities for the youth of Lake City.



Mayor Lovith Anderson and City of Lake City Council stand with our friends and neighbors impacted by Hurricane Florence. You are in our thoughts and prayers.

Additionally, the Lake City community is planning food drives and other ways to assist communities affected by the storms in the Pee Dee.

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#GIVINGTUESDAY PEE DEE DONATION

Submitted by Denise Howard



#GivingTuesday Photo Booth

the community. Enjoy friends, fun and fundraising as we create a culture of giving in the Pee Dee. Participating nonprofits will be collecting items such as toys, games, diapers, hygiene products and monetary donations to carry out their programs.

Donors can make a real difference by giving to one or multiple organizations to support their personal philanthropic passions—whether that passion is for animals, arts & culture, education, health, religion, the environment, human services or general community benefit. It's an easy, one-stop way for you to fill your "cart" with causes that matter most to you.

People interested in volunteering for regional nonprofits can meet the organization's leaders and learn more about volunteer opportunities. It's also a great way to introduce children and young people to the world of philanthropy by seeing so many organizations working together to improve the quality of life for the Pee Dee.

#GivingTuesdayPeeDee is a local undertaking of the global #GivingTuesday movement and presented by Eastern Carolina Community Foundation in collaboration with 50 regional nonprofits. Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.

For more information and to find out specific needs visit www.givingtuesdaypeedee.org.

#GivingTuesday Pee Dee returns for a second year to give people in our community an opportunity to support the nonprofit organizations doing great work in the seven-county Pee Dee area.

Join us Nov. 27 from 3-7p.m. in downtown Florence at the Waters Building to meet our local nonprofit organizations and learn about how they serve

FUND IN HONOR OF GOVERNOR BEASLEY

Submitted by Sarah Shelley, Executive Director



Recently, Governor David Beasley did such a good job conveying the need and impact of the United Nation's World Food Programme

(WFP) at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon that an anonymous donor called the Community Foundation to inquire about starting a fund for WFP in his honor. Done!



Governor Beasley explained that the World Food Programme at the UN is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger by spending over \$19 million a day distributing food in 75 countries. Its structure and logistical capacity, carried out by an

average of 70 aircraft, 20 ships and 5,000 trucks means it can reach those most in need wherever they are.

We invite you to contribute to the new UN World Food Programme Fund in honor of David Beasley by mailing a check to Eastern Carolina Community Foundation/WFP (P.O. Box 1615, Florence 29503) or by [making a contribution online](#).

Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowable by federal law. Governor Beasley will receive notice of your gift in his honor. This fund will exist at Eastern Carolina Community Foundation, and contributions will be transferred to WFP on an annual basis. For more information, call 843-667-1131 or email info@easterncarolinacf.org.



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RUDELL DUBOSE NAMED WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT

Submitted by Quinetta M. Buterbaugh, President



Rudell DuBose

HARTSVILLE—Rudell DuBose of the Darlington County School District has been named the 2018 Woman of Achievement by the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce. DuBose was honored at the Women’s Leadership Symposium, Sept. 21, presented by Sonoco.

With a special education degree from Winthrop University, DuBose began her career as a teacher before earning her master’s degree in remediation/at risk students from Francis Marion University. She joined the team providing federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs to economically disadvantaged youth with barriers to education/employment at Hartsville High School, Darlington High School and Lamar High School. DuBose progressed in the JTPA program until she became program coordinator in 2000. She is also certified as a job coach and a Global Career Development Facilitator (GCDF).

She is an active partner of the SC Works Hartsville Center, dedicated to creating and supporting a strong workforce for Darlington County. She is also involved with Adult Education in both Hartsville and Darlington, serves with the Guidance Counselors and Career Development Facilitators (CDFs) at all three high schools and has a special place in her heart for students with disabilities. She is passionate about her work with the district’s Exceptional Education Department.

“As a professional who believes in investing in educational development, enriching the community and balancing her personal

and professional commitments, Rudell DuBose embodies the title of Woman of Achievement,” said Hartsville Chamber President Quinetta Buterbaugh. “Educators like Ruddell, and particularly educators involved in workforce programs, are ushering in the future business leaders of the community. We thank her for her strong commitment to the future.”

DuBose has been recognized with the Partnership Pros Award for her establishment of partnerships and relationships with countless community programs, educational institutions and employers. She was also recognized by the South Carolina Department of Commerce’s Pathway Program for her contributions to students and their success in school and eventual success in the workforce. The Darlington County Community Action Agency (CAA) has also recognized Ms. DuBose for her outstanding contributions to Darlington County youth.

Women’s Leadership Symposium Platinum and Gold sponsors include Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center, Burry Bookstore, Duke Energy, Hospice Care of South Carolina, North Industrial Machine, Raceway Ford Chevrolet and SPC Credit Union.

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.

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FOR THE BETTERMENT OF COMMUNITY

by Adalia Ellis



Pete Mazzaroni

MULLINS - Pete Mazzaroni, the executive director of the Marion County Healthcare Foundation was born in the Bronx and grew up in central New Jersey. His work with Hoffmann-La Roche, a Swiss multinational healthcare company, brought him to Florence in 1995. He chose to stay when Roche sold the Florence location, and he had the opportunity to relocate. When speaking of his transition from the North to the South, he pointed out that people in the South are a lot more hospitable.

"I remember early on that when you walk into a grocery store, and they say, 'Hey, how are you?' it's because they genuinely care."

Pete left behind lots of traffic, a high tax rate and snow for a slower pace, less traffic, and lower tax rates. And who wants to shovel snow? Although work brought him here, it was a significant lesson learned as a young man that shaped the trajectory of his life. Mazzaroni's father worked hard and "instilled the importance of working for things."

He added that "life is not handouts" and cited one example of this. When he was 17, he was ready for his first car, and he thought he'd be given his father's old one. Instead, his father gave him a sale price, so Mazzaroni bought his first car from his father. This would serve as the first of many challenges that he approached as opportunities.

Mazzaroni's career path to his position with the Healthcare Foundation was not linear. Instead, he was presented with challenges that he saw as opportunities for growth. "I made a career out of accepting new challenges and possibilities."

He didn't go to college right out of high school but became a police officer instead. After leaving the public sector and joining FMC Corporation, he knew he would be limited in what he could do if he didn't go back to school and pursue his degree. He returned to school and got undergraduate and master's degrees while working a fulltime job and raising a family. He eventually got a job with Roche where he spent 27 years accepting challenge after challenge and still loved every minute of it. "If you enjoy what you're doing, you won't work a day in your life."

So when Roche sold the Florence facility, Mazzaroni stayed and retired early but knew he wanted to keep doing something with his life. He used his experience at Roche to have a significant impact on the lives of people living in Marion county by taking on the position as the executive director of the Healthcare Foundation.

"There are a lot of needs, and the foundation can be a difference maker."

The Foundation is part of the Marion County Coordinating Council, which brings together all agencies in Marion county to look at how they can work together to have the best outcome for the most people. In this way, diversity is very important.

Each individual and agency comes with strengths and experience to bare on solutions. Diversity gives them a competitive advantage by increasing the probability of developing strategies and solutions that will help many people. The key ingredients for the successful facilitation of such conversations are to make it clear that you are committed to inclusion while also being open minded and transparent regarding why you are trying to do what you are doing.

Mazzaroni has been in his position for a year. He pointed out that what has been significant and will have the greatest impact on Marion county are

the conversations that are happening within a diverse group of people focused on the betterment of the community.



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SEC SOLAR UPDATE

Submitted by Mary Grace McGee, Marketing Representative



Santee Electric's Manager of System Engineering, Ryan Cooper, explains how solar energy is sent to nearby substation. (Photo Credit/Caption) Walter Allread



KINGSTREE - In May, SANTEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE (SEC) introduced its first community solar farm, located on Highway 52 at the Williamsburg Industrial park. Community solar allows many people to get solar power from a midsize solar array. This also gives SEC members an opportunity to participate in solar energy production without assuming the liability, and paying the high cost of installation and upkeep of a rooftop system. This program is even available to members living in rental properties or multi-family homes, who would normally be unable to install solar power.

Currently, 48 of 130 blocks have been purchased by 12 members. There is an upfront cost of \$50 and a monthly charge of \$14 per block, and members are allowed to purchase up to five blocks. So far, each block has generated a credit of \$18-\$21 each month it has been in use. This credit is likely to decrease as fall arrives and the days grow shorter. However, the environmental benefits will always be there.

There are still 82 blocks available. Please call 1-800-922-1604 or go to www.santee.org for more information or to subscribe to Santee Electric's Community Solar.



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WHY THE BUSINESS WORLD IS EMBRACING INTERSECTIONALITY

Submitted by Dr. Nika White, President and CEO, Nika White Consulting, Best Selling Author of "The Intentional Inclusionist®"



Dr. Nika White

GREENVILLE - This month, Ellene V. Miles will join Sony Pictures' marketing team as their Senior Vice President of Intersectional Marketing. This newly created position reflects the business world's growing awareness of what has been a major blind spot in their diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts, one that has been costing them in terms of both talent and productivity.

What is "intersectionality"? Legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw offers this analogy: "Discrimination, like traffic through an intersection, may flow in one direction, and it may flow in another. If an accident happens in an intersection, it can be caused by cars travelling from any number of directions and, sometimes, from all of them."

This is a great illustration of intersectionality. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines intersectionality as "the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups."

In simplest terms, intersectionality refers to the ways in which multiple identity categories such as race, gender and ethnicity relate to one another. While these definitions highlight the hidden or overlooked difficulties some groups face, they also point to an opportunity for organizations to deepen their understanding and practice of D&I. They can also define intersectionality in terms of its potential, rather than just a problem.

The opportunity lies in looking at D&I through a completely different lens, which lets us uncover deeper connections among identities and helps us understand the multiple ways in which members of a particular group see and interact with the world.

How adopting an "intersectional lens" can help

International consulting firm Deloitte offers an explanation of the one-dimensional nature of D&I, and the ironic position in which it leaves businesses that are trying to make improvements in this area: "Any attempt to bucket groups for D&I initiatives is incomplete as a diversity framework... the very act of naming or categorizing group identities has the paradoxical effect of excluding or downplaying other intersecting identities of the individual members of that group." In other words, it's an incomplete way of looking at diversity but a way that has been perpetuated, nonetheless, perhaps inadvertently.

By identifying with one aspect of self (race, gender, ability, etc.) in a given situation, one automatically is asked to disregard other intersecting categories of identity. This dilemma often goes unacknowledged in the workplace, making it difficult to understand problems of co-workers on a team. It also keeps companies from connecting with the full range of consumers and other stakeholders. Sony Pictures is aware of this. The company is looking to its new VP of Intersectional Marketing to help craft marketing strategies that will connect them with the widest audience possible.

This inherent irony can blind us to the potential that exists at the places where identities intersect. I offer some insights in my forthcoming white paper on the compound identities that can exist within a business team or other organization and the changes that can occur when they are acknowledged and mined for the opportunities they present.

Intersectionality as a leadership competency

Adding this layer to the quest for diversity and inclusion in the workplace can be challenging. It demands a high level of emotional maturity, self-awareness and empathy. Leaders must be willing to

reflect on their own compound identities and share their own stories before asking others to do the same.

If there is potential for growth in diversity and inclusion through working with the intersectional identities of team members, that willingness to examine and understand how these identities work together must start at the top. Keep in mind, the best leaders lead by example. Therefore, leaders must be open to using their own intersecting identities to inform their business relationships and decision-making. Periodic, formal intersectionality assessments can help organizations better understand the identities shaping their workforce. A first step could be simply looking at how an organization treats identity categories. Are they treated as separate entities, or are they being tapped for the different potentials they hold? The answer could be the beginning of stronger D&I efforts that improve environments and outcomes for everyone.

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BROADENING THE VISION BEYOND WHAT'S FAMILIAR

by Adalia Ellis



Teresa Gerrald

Teresa Gerrald is the only person of color on the corporate team at Raldex, a hotel management company that manages five hotels in Florence. Gerrald, who was born and raised in Florence, says that all of her life she has been the first or the only person of color, opening the way for others. She speaks about this experience with a sense of pride. "The very first time I started a job I was the only black person there, and it gave me that sense of pride that when our people walked in the door, or when they looked at a picture of the

company, they saw a face that they could recognize."

Gerrald enjoys going to work at Raldex everyday, which she attributes to the vision of its owner, Dave Aycok, which is that anyone who works for Raldex is a part of a family--they are not simply employees. They eat together, socialize together and do activities together like a family. At the end of the year, the company shares a portion of the profits with the corporate team as well as the front desk, maintenance, housekeeping, and any individual who is a part of the Raldex family who contributed to a successful year.

When asked about her current career she replied, "I didn't choose my career. My career chose me."

Gerrald spent many years in banking and had come to a point in her life that she knew it was time to move on. It was at this time that the opportunity to work at Raldex presented itself, and she grabbed it.

Gerrald is excited to see the increase in diversity as she gets older. As a person who grew up during the time before integration, she went

to predominantly black schools until they were integrated in 1970. Up until then, she had gone to school with people in her neighborhood--people she knew--and her teachers were all black. Gerrald was in one of the first classes to go to West Florence in 1970, which was disappointing at first because she had always looked forward to going to Wilson. Then her eyes were opened, and she got to see that there is a different world out there other than just the black community. It was her first time really interacting with the white community, which broadened her vision beyond the black community.

This broadening of her vision continued into college. She went to Clemson University, where she was shown the vastness of the world. She was introduced to different cultures and gained understanding of what other's lives were like, compared to her own. Diversity has been very important in Gerrald's life and in the work she does. She grew up thinking that certain jobs were for certain people, but when she went on to college, she saw so many people of color pursuing an education in careers like as doctors and lawyers, for example. Anyone could be what he or she chose to be.

Gerrald says that a key ingredient to learn from diversity is accepting people for whom they are. "Diversity is important to me to showcase that everybody can do anything no matter who you are. We actually learn from each other. You grow with each other if we are willing to learn from each other."



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INTRODUCING THE 2018 DFT PRESENTER AND FACILITATOR



Dr. Idella G. Glenn, Presenter

- Consultant Biography: Idella G. Glenn
- Ph.D. – Educational Leadership, Clemson University (December 2008)
 - M.Ed. – Higher Education Administration, University of South Carolina Columbia (May 1996)
 - B.S. – Computer Science/Mathematics, Furman University (February 1986)

Dr. Glenn has over 25 years of higher education experience, with the last 20 focused on leadership for diversity and inclusion. She is currently serving as special advisor on Inclusivity and Diversity at Hollins University in Roanoke, Va. The special advisor has broad responsibility for building internal capacity to address issues of inclusivity and diversity at the university. Functioning as an expert resource for the Hollins University community, the advisor has oversight of and coordinates all inclusivity and diversity activities and programs.

Prior to Hollins, Glenn served as Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) director for Diversity Education and Retention Initiatives within the Division of Inclusive Excellence. Prior to VCU, she spent 18 years at Furman University serving in various roles, including asst. VP for Student Development, asst. dean for Diversity and Inclusion, and director of Multicultural Affairs. Prior to Furman, Glenn served as the records manager (registrar) at Spartanburg Community College.

Glenn has earned designation as a certified diversity professional (CDP) through the Institute for Diversity Certification and is a qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory. She is a graduate of the Riley Institute Diversity Leadership Academy, Class 2, and is a graduate of Leadership Greenville, class 28. Glenn is also a member of the National Coalition Building Institute Board of Directors and serves on the National Advisory Council of the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity.



Cynthia J. Walters, Ed.D., Facilitator

Dr. Cynthia J. Walters is a 43-year employee of Palmetto Health and in 2013 was appointed the first corporate director of Inclusion. Her responsibilities include strategic leadership, infrastructure building and process development to strengthen and sustain a culture of inclusion for team members, patients, physicians and the communities served. Walters feels that every human being should feel visible, valued and respected. She knows that this does automatically occur. However, through system changes, engagement and development, it is her goal to help lead others into a knowledge that all people should be appreciated and allowed to use their gifts and talents to make the world better. She states, "We are all not the same; however, our contributions are driven by more than what others can see." Previous roles include Palmetto Health director of Organization Development and director of Education. She is an ordained Baptist minister and founder of Women of Wisdom Ministries.

Walters earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology, a master's degree in community and occupational programs in education and a doctor of education degree, all from the University of South Carolina. She has done further study at Erskine Theological Seminary. She is a graduate of the Riley Diversity Leadership Program (Furman University) and the Boston, Massachusetts, Hospital Program for Reducing Disparities Leadership Program.

She chairs the SC Chamber of Council on Diversity and Foundation and is a member of the Greater Columbia Community Relations Council. In addition, she serves on and is a member of several organizations within her community.

She is married to Otis Walters, Jr., residing in Blythewood. They are proud parents of three adult children and one grandson.






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MOTHER-DAUGHTER DUO TAKES ON FASHION IN FLORENCE

by Tory White



Shereca Anderson

Gloria and Shereca Anderson is a mother and daughter fashionable partnership. Gloria is age 65 and retired from the manufacturing industry with General Electrician 2016 and decided to fulfill a lifelong dream. With a Master of Business Administration degree and background in finance, Shereca understood the interworking of business. They both recollect years of exchanging articles from each other's closets, which allowed them to achieve their

desired fashionable look. From these humble beginnings, The Trendy Twist Boutique was conceived. The boutique provides a combination of modern and contemporary brands, allowing for this twist in fashion they both envisioned.

Gloria always held to a dream of having a clothing store of her own. Her love for fashion began while working as a sales clerk for the Diana Shop in Downtown Florence after graduating from Wilson High School in 1971. The position allowed her to style and coordinate outfits and fall in love with quality fabrics and a variety of fashion styles. Gloria enjoys keeping up with the trends and remaining fashionable all the time.

Shereca's love for fashion began while working part-time at Goody's Family Clothing as a customer service representative when she was attending Francis Marion University in the '90s. Shereca truly fell in love with fashion while living Atlanta, Ga. and having access to purchase brands and styles from around the world.

Like most small business owners, it was a tedious process to gain a license to carry their first line of clothing. Ivy Jane, which is distributed by Freddy Simon & Associates in Atlanta, Ga. was the first company to

understand the dream the ladies held to and allowed them to sell their products. After establishing a solid foundation, they were able to earn approval from other distributors such as One State, Donna Morgan, Sanctuary, Uncle Frank and many others. They've recently obtain approval from Canadian Distributor French Dressing Jeans (FDJ). They also have a beautiful line of jewelry that will satisfy every woman's taste.

Trendy Twist Boutique desires to assist every woman to attain diva status by offering top-of-the-line fashion. They examine the quality of every item they purchase and offer it at a modest price.



Gloria Anderson

This team has aspirations of growing their online boutique store nationally and create a strong community presence. It is their future desire to launch a program to assist less fortunate women in preparing for and entering the workforce by hosting fundraisers and donating clothing. In October they are donating a percentage of their proceeds from their French

Dressing Jeans (FDJ) products to breast cancer awareness and research. In addition, they will launch a pink ribbon sale campaign, which will allow them to donate an additional percentage of October sales to cancer awareness. In the future, their ultimate goal is to host a fashion show, which features breast cancer survivors as the models and bring community involvement and awareness on a larger scale. Breast cancer awareness is dear to them because they've had several friends and family members who have been affected.

Visit the website at www.trendytwistboutique.com or their store at 3656 S. Irby St. Florence, SC, 29505.



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Bryan C. Wenner, DC

Celista McKenzie, FNP
Medical Director

Brandon Morris, DC

YOU'RE NOT ALONE, CALL KEYSTONE!

Submitted by Keystone Healthcare & Wellness LLC



Bryan Wenner, DC

In practice since 2002, **Bryan Wenner DC, owner of Keystone**, has specialized in traumatic injury care in motor vehicle accidents and sports injuries. He served as the team chiropractor for Florence's professional hockey team, the **Pee Dee Pride**, Pee Dee Cyclones and Florence Phantoms arena football, as well as works with Florence's local attorneys in treating their auto accident clients.

He added **Celista McKenzie a nurse practitioner**, to the staff three years ago to oversee the medical team at Keystone Healthcare. She brings 16 years of experience with her, including **three years in the emergency room** where she continues to PRN once a month. McKenzie also does **corticosteroids injections** in our procedure room as needed for shoulders, knees and elbows for our patients.



Celista McKenzie, FNP

She provides very specific treatment plans for our patients, sometimes prescribing only medical care, including passive and active therapies, injections and medication. While with other patients, she might decide to include chiropractic care, as well as passive and active therapies at her discretion if that particular situation warrants.

McKenzie is not only certified for **adult care** but is also credentialed for **pediatric care**. While she oversees the medical-care we provide at the office, including the steroid injections in our procedure room, she also works closely with other providers to **refer for MRI and spinal injections for pain management**. With only a small amount of time to get our patients better after an automobile accident, we offer our procedures in a very systematic and efficient timeframe to best accommodate our patients.

Being involved in an accident can be one of the most stressful and devastating experiences in your life. One instant, everything may seem fine, the next moment you are involved in a traumatic event. Many individuals who endure motor vehicle accidents may think they feel fine or are not hurt bad enough to seek care. However, it can take days or even weeks before whiplash symptoms occur. There is even a diagnosis known as "**late whiplash**



Brandon Morris, DC

syndrome," which is defined as a collection of symptoms and disabilities seen more than six months after a neck injury occurring in a motor vehicle accident.

Although no one ever wants to be involved in an automobile accident, it is essential to know how to proceed with treating your injuries if you are involved in one. Keystone offers chiropractic care as well as medical care, and we focus on treating the most common automobile accident injuries.

Here at Keystone we adjust subluxations, which are misalignments in joints that can interfere with proper biomechanics and optimal nerve transmission, which is often associated with whiplash. Removal of these subluxations can help treat symptoms such as headaches, neck pain, back pain and other related injuries. Most people assume that whiplash injuries only occur during high-speed collisions. However, **it only takes a variation in 2-3 miles per hour to cause injuries to muscles, ligaments, tendons and discs**. Other individuals may not experience any serious symptoms right away and may think they are just stiff or sore after the accident, when serious injuries could be developing that could last a lifetime. **Research shows it is reasonable to infer that a significant proportion--up to 45 percent--of individuals with chronic neck pain in the general population were originally injured in a motor vehicle accident.**

Many times individuals who have been injured in a car accident have so much muscle pain and stiffness that they cannot function normally and are left dealing with abnormal biomechanics for the rest of their lives. If left untreated these issues can go on to cause other additional serious health problems, in fact, you may not think you have been injured after an automobile accident and then start to experience discomfort or headaches several months after the fact. Therefore, you should always visit us at **Keystone Health Care**, even if you believe you are not seriously injured.

Initially, we will want to take x-rays to determine if there are any serious injuries to the ligaments of the spine and to check for vertebral subluxations. You may not notice the signs or symptoms of this type of injury, so it is important that you understand why we need to take x-rays. Here at Keystone Health Care and Wellness, if for any reason the doctor or nurse practitioner believes you need more **diagnostic imaging such as an MRI or CT**, you can trust that you will be referred accordingly so that we can find the fundamental source of your pain.

When you immediately treat an injury like this, you are putting the body in the best possible position to heal and recover quickly, this is why you need to visit us right away. We can help put the spine back to its original position, thus help the body start optimal healing and with better biomechanics. We can help relieve pain through passive therapies such as **electric stimulation, intersegmental tractions, massage therapy** and also **active therapies** such as **specific exercises and stretches**.

The first step in healing after an accident is taking the initiative to visit us here at Keystone. With professional help you can start recovering after a traumatic injury and put yourself on track to the best recovery.

Keystone Health Care resides in an **8000-square-foot newly remodeled building** with digital x-ray, active therapy bay, passive therapy bay and a procedure room for our patient injections. We have worked diligently over the last 16 years to best serve our injury patients and give them the best trauma care we possibly can.

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IT TAKES MORE THAN TALK TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

by Robin Lewis



HEMINGWAY -

With the increase in the need for improved race relations in our nation, there are many in the church who are seeking to create racial diversity. Churches with members

of diverse races, especially those in the south, are still few and far between. It takes more than talk to make it happen.

Many Christians today say they want to have racially mixed churches, but few actually take the steps needed to intentionally create it. In Hemingway there is a very unique prayer group that meets weekly at First United Methodist Church on Broad Street. The group was birthed just over two years ago when a group of women gathered to talk about the vision of the church. A desire to know God's heart for their church grew, and The Mustard Seed Prayer Group was formed.

As church members began meeting and praying and allowing their vision to take shape, they realized that their focus must include all parts of the community. Mary Sutton, founding member and leader, encouraged the group members to think of everyone in the local community in all aspects of life. The Mustard Seed Group began



Prayer Walk

praying for all areas of culture, specific neighborhoods, businesses, churches, and local government and also started a prayer walk at the Hemingway Campground every Saturday morning.

As its discussion and prayers became more community-focused, the group realized the need to include other churches. Hemingway FUMC is predominately white in membership and the group desired to reach out to believers of different races, backgrounds, and neighborhoods in the area.

Robin Lewis, one of the founding members of the group, contacted Rev. Ernest Frierson, pastor of Mount Seal and Jeremiah United Methodist Churches, which are predominately African American in membership and invited them to attend. Several members from both churches have been in attendance ever since.

The group then grew with new members from two non-denominational churches, one in Hemingway and one in Georgetown. As they continued to sit down together weekly, the Lord put on their hearts to better understand each other. Different members of the group have shared stories from their own lives growing up as black or white



Prayer Walk

in the area. They realized they must be willing to have the hard or uncomfortable conversations in order to grow in unity.

Retired Rev. Farrell Cox and his wife Harriet drive from Pamplico

to attend Hemingway FUMC and the weekly prayer group. They have brought much wisdom and contribute regularly with books to give to others to help the group members grow in their faith.

Beverly McDuffie and her husband, James, moved to Hemingway to start a church, and she began attending the prayer group. They also have birthed a men's ministry in the town with a monthly Iron Man Breakfast and public prayer in the neighborhoods just south of Hemingway.



Prayer Walk

If we say we want diversity in our churches, it will always take more than mere talk. It requires intentionality and a focused plan to meet the goals. It requires us all to humble ourselves and become willing to love and serve each other.

In the book of James 1:22-25, we read these words: "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do."

The Mustard Seed Group members remind each other regularly that heaven includes everyone from every race and nation, and we don't have to wait to get to heaven to begin experiencing that here and now. They practice being led by the Holy Spirit in their prayer times together, for the spirit guides them specifically in how to pray over concerns. While the group originated at a Methodist church, the group identity is non-denominational, and anyone interested is welcome to attend.



Robin Lewis and Pastor Ernest W. Frierson

The prayer vision for the Hemingway and surrounding community includes transformation, healing and revival. The group prays for all sectors of culture including families, churches, businesses, local government, entertainment, media and education. The group also prays

for our state and national concerns.

If you would like to visit The Mustard Seed Prayer Group, come any Tuesday morning at 9:30 a.m. to First United Methodist Church on Broad Street in Hemingway. Contact Robin Lewis for more information at 843-319-5390.

CHURCH IN CONWAY MAKING SURE THEY REMAIN SOCIALLY ACTIVE

by Jennifer Robinson



Rev. William Miller

CONWAY - Bethel African American Episcopal Church is a 151-year-old congregation in Conway. The historic area in which the church is located thrived during the Jim Crow era with African American businesses such as hotels, restaurants, grocery stores and funeral homes. Bethel AME, in its efforts to maintain its rich history, is leading the way in social action throughout the region. Under the leadership of Rev.

William Miller, Bethel's members are active in social action by educating individuals about upcoming elections, sharing voting site information, and the church serves as a phone banking site. In his four years as pastor, Miller stated he and his congregation "have hosted community forums to educate citizens about the issues surrounding voting rights and how community partners can work together to advance common ideals for bettering collective success." He has also been personally active in many communities. He has participated in marches and attended council meetings in various places he has lived.



One social action focus for Bethel church members is the upcoming election in November. Miller said, "In this election year we will have to place emphasis on

equity within the educational system by making sure that there is an appropriate apportionment relative to the needs of all students. Access to affordable health care and living wages are issues that we must address in hopes to ensure that all citizens have a chance at a better quality of life. In a region (Horry County) that depends greatly upon tourism and hospitality, those working in the industry deserve respect, and their dignity should be honored. Access to affordable housing is an issue that continues to loom as the number of new residents moving to South Carolina (particularly the coastal region) steadily grows and housing costs are on the rise. The changing state of the environment, sustainability and ecological care are pressing in the unpredictability of weather patterns that bring constant threats of coastal flooding. Each parishioner has been given the responsibility of registering at least one person to vote. Many of them do not have to look far, considering they have people in their homes who recently reached adulthood and have been disengaged from



elections over the last four years. We are also hosting a community cookout on Oct.14, where we intend to create an intentional time of community during the upcoming elections. It is an effort to bridge the gap in what is a presently divided world politically (unlike any recent period in history). There is no charge for the food, and we expect to feed 500 persons or until the supplies run out. During the month of

October, our church vans will also be transporting elderly persons to the elections commission who may not have transportation to make it on election day. We are non-partisan, but we take each opportunity to remind our parishioners that voting impacts our communities to become brighter spots of love and opportunity by giving committed individuals a chance to help make that possible."

Social action has an impact on new voters, and those who are in churches should know the importance of engagement. The way that Miller communicates this importance is by helping them understand that their vote "does indeed count." He says that "local elections have been decided by fewer than 500 votes when only a simple majority was necessary to be elected." Education about the election process is also necessary to impact new voters. Without education, they will be uninformed about not only the election process but also candidates and the issues. Miller concluded by stating, "The church, historically, was a place of provision. The early Church, in antiquity, provided food, clothing and shelter when it was needed. That same community provided refuge in the time of persecution. As some wrested with what it means to be persons of faith in a time of need, they should find comfort in knowing that this question has been on the minds of many since the formation of the Christian church."

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BOARD 'LISTENING SESSIONS' DESIGNED TO UNDERSTAND EDUCATIONAL GAPS

Submitted by FDTC



The National Science Board (NSB) held its “listening session” at Florence-Darlington Technical College in Florence. Board members heard the insights of the local community on challenges and opportunities related to the

skilled technical workforce—individuals who use STEM capabilities in their jobs but do not have a bachelor’s degree.

The goal for the event was to add to the Board’s broader understanding about an issue of great interest to the National Science Foundation (NSF) as well as to Congress, the Administration, the science and engineering community and other stakeholders.

“These listening sessions give the Board a chance to learn about different types of community colleges that serve diverse populations and industries across America,” said James Jackson, chair of NSB’s External Engagement Committee and psychology professor at the University of Michigan. “Learning from a range of individuals gives us valuable insights that inform the Board’s thinking about how to foster growth and development of the nation’s skilled technical workforce.”

NSB is NSF’s governing board and advises Congress and the President on science policy issues. NSF is the only federal agency to support fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering.

According to NSF’s Science & Engineering Indicators 2018 report, South Carolina has a slightly lower percentage of people working in technical occupations -- about 1.2 percent -- compared to the national average of 1.4 percent. South Carolina is one of 14 states plus the District of Columbia that performs between \$1-\$5 billion per year in research and development (R&D). Annual state performance in R&D varies considerably, from \$253 million in Wyoming to \$125 billion in California. R&D spending is a driver of innovation. Investing in science and technology today has ripple-effect benefits throughout the economy over the long term.

“NSF has invested in the basic research, assisted in the commercialization of technological inventions, and fostered growth to a point that NSF is now involved in thinking about and helping to shape, the education of the workforce needed to evolve these industries,” said Victor McCrary, chair of NSB’s Skilled Technical Workforce Task Force and a member of the NSB. “These nationwide listening sessions help the Board learn about which partnerships work between business and educational institutions and where the Board can bridge the educational gap to help fill in-demand, high-paying, skilled, technical jobs across the country.”

Florence-Darlington Technical College is a publicly funded and community-based higher education institution and home to the NSF-funded South Carolina Advanced Technological Education (SCATE) National Resource Center, dedicated to expanding excellence in technical education. It is one of 42 Advanced Technological Education Centers in the United States.

In conjunction with NSB’s listening session, the SC Department of Commerce’s Department of Innovation will host a 3Phase Workshop the following day, in collaboration with the SIMT, SCATE and several area business incubators. The workshop will focus on funding opportunities for small business through the SBIR Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program. Board members will had the opportunity to engage with start-up entrepreneurs and local government officials working to provide an environment that fosters growth and success among small tech business community in South Carolina. Participants include the

regional industry, South Carolina Department of Commerce, the South Carolina Research Authority and the technology incubator community at FTDC.

The event sought out local insights into workforce issues to catalyze and inform discussions about essential components of the nation’s economy.

NSB members and business leaders were among a diverse group of stakeholders, spanning industry, chambers of commerce, local and state government, educational institutions and students.

The National Science Board and the National Science Foundation director jointly head NSF. NSB identifies issues critical to NSF’s future and establishes the Foundation’s policies. The NSB also provides the President and Congress with Science and Engineering Indicators, a biennial report on U.S. progress in science and technology. Members are appointed by the President for six-year terms and selected for their eminence in research, education and records of distinguished service.

About SCATE:

SCATE, a National ATE Center for Expanding Excellence in Technician Education since 1994, is a well established and widely connected NSF-funded initiative housed at Florence-Darlington Technical College. Its resources support the development of a highly skilled technician workforce in engineering, manufacturing and industrial technologies via faculty development and mentoring, problem-based learning, research, evaluation, and student scholarships and internships. SCATE provides the nation’s only online service that proactively connects educators to relevant professional development. For more information see SCATE websites: www.scate.org, www.TeachingTechnicians.org, and www.Mentor-Connect.org.



FDTC WINS A FIVE-YEAR GRANT



The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) funding to continue its Upward Bound Program for five years. The first year will be funded at \$385,586.

FDTC’s Upward Bound Program is based on the main campus in Florence. It offers a broad array of services to help high school students complete their high school diplomas and successfully transition and complete postsecondary credentials. Career assessment, financial aid assistance, cultural enrichment activities, workshops and college tours are examples of the activities to which Upward Bound students have access.

“The Upward Bound Program is very important in helping high school students reach their goals,” said Jennifer Mabry, FDTC’s director of Institutional Grants. “Each student receives a coach who is their advocate and will help them recognize and overcome challenges that may arise.”

FDTC’s Upward Bound staff will be working with area high schools to identify and enroll eligible students in the program. The eight eligible high schools are in FDTC’s three-county service area. The high schools are Creek Bridge, Darlington, Hannah-Pamplico, Lake City, Lamar, Marion, Timmons ville and Wilson. For more information, contact FDTC at 843-661-8324 or visit www.fdtc.edu.

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THE SCHOOL FOUNDATION INTRODUCES COUNT 5! INITIATIVE

by Mallory Brayboy



Left to right: Dr. Tammy Pawloski - Francis Marion University, Debbie Hyler - The School Foundation, Dr. Floyd Creech - Florence 1 Schools, Helle Heckmann - early childhood expert and author of *Slow Parenting* and Dr. Richard O'Malley - Florence 1 Schools

The School Foundation is a non-profit organization created to provide resources and support to administrators, teachers and students of Florence 1 Schools. It is the largest education non-profit in the state and fulfills its mission by building community involvement in local public schools, helping

parents prepare their children for kindergarten/elementary school, and assisting local teachers in the grant-application process. The foundation also promotes educational excellence in Florence 1 Schools through high impact initiatives designed to prepare all students for success. This past September, The School Foundation, along with Florence 1 Schools, held an Early Childhood Champions Summit highlighting its new Count 5! public awareness campaign. Count 5! encourages parents and caregivers of children under age seven to implement five key factors into the daily lives of children to ensure they perform and learn at their highest capacity. These five factors include sleep, movement, nutrition, routine and love. Helle Heckman, author and founder and director of Nokken Daycare Centre, keyed the summit, shedding light on these "5 Golden Keys."

Heckman noted that all keys are deeply connected with no one key more important than the other. She began with sleep, stating that children under age six needs at least 12 hours of sleep at night to be capable of the demanding life we offer them. According to Heckman, children who lack adequate sleep yield results equal to those with autism, depression and ADHD. Not only do children need proper rest, but adults also need eight hours of sleep to function at their highest capacity and care for their precious beings.



Left to right: Mindy Taylor - Duke Energy, Davy Gregg - Duke Energy, Debbie Hyler - The School Foundation, Dr. Floyd Creed - Florence 1 Schools and Dr. Richard O'Malley - Florence 1 Schools

Heckman then reminded the audience of the importance of movement. It is a natural trait to children, and caregivers should not be so quick to place restraints on youth. With the

rise in technology use seen today, one should in fact encourage more movement as opposed to the use of tablets and television. Heckman suggested hiking as an outlet for increased activity and making certain that children wear proper shoes and attire during such activities.

She followed with nutrition, encouraging parents to bring cooking back into the household. Heckman noted that children are consuming far too many unhealthy snacks as opposed to grains, oats, rye and quinoa. Allowing a child to assist in meal preparation makes him or her more likely to not only consume healthier foods but to appreciate them. Simply slicing carrots or sweet potatoes is a great kid-friendly task suggested by Heckman.

Her presentation continued with the positive effects of a solid routine. Heckman believes this type of structure creates a rhythmical life where children feel safe and secure. Not only should homework and bedtimes be incorporated into routines, play should never be

excluded. "Early academics do not make children clever--they do what you tell them to do. Play is where children learn and become creative individuals," explained Heckman.

The last key introduced was love, which covers an array of areas. Heckman explained that creating the time to implement these pivotal factors into your daily life may not be easy, but a love for yourself and for your children should fuel you. She encouraged the audience to "learn to love doing those necessary things that you may not enjoy doing." Also, place an emphasis on showing children love through language, touch and interaction.

Heckman's presentation was followed by Dr. Tammy Pawloski, director of the Francis Marion Center of Excellence, who further emphasized the significance of each of the 5 Golden Keys. Others on the agenda included Dr. Richard O'Malley, superintendent of Florence 1 Schools; Debbie Hyler, executive director of The School Foundation; and Dr. Floyd Creech, administrator of School Readiness for Florence 1 Schools. Additionally, The School Foundation recognized a generous donation of \$9,800 from Duke Energy during the summit.



The Count 5! Campaign kicked off in September and will run through February 2019, challenging parents and caregivers to take part in monthly Count 5! activities and commit to using the 5 Golden Keys daily. Each month will center on a different key: September - Sleep, October - Movement, November- Nutrition, January- Routine, February- Love. Visit www.TheSchoolFoundation.org for more information and resources.

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CCU WELCOMES ASHLEY GADDY

Submitted by Carolina Rohr, CCU External Communication Coordinator



Ashley Gaddy

CONWAY - Accessibility, inclusion and diversity are an integral part of the strategic plan at Coastal Carolina University in Conway. It is one of the missions of the University to engage students, faculty, staff and the greater community in a partnership of learning grounded in the liberal arts, based on respect for diversity and inclusion. One of the areas on campus that plays a large role in fulfilling this mission is the Office of Intercultural and Inclusion Student Services.

The office changed its name over the summer of 2018 from Multicultural Student Services and hired a new director following the retirement of the former director. Ashley Gaddy joined the Office of Intercultural and Inclusion Student Services in July 2018 after serving in multicultural student affairs and housing at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond.

Gaddy has had a passion for education centered on diversity since before she started her graduate work at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. She did her master's thesis on ethnography in a low-income area of Wilmington, and her constant observations of the people inside and outside of that community propelled her into a career in higher education.

"There is a huge need for diversity work, and that makes me very excited," Gaddy said. "I'm looking forward to educating and empowering faculty and staff so that diversity and inclusion work is done campuswide and becomes what everyone does."

Gaddy emphasized that even though the name of the office has changed, the atmosphere within the office will be one that is welcoming to all students.

"Students can expect interculturalism and inclusion here," she said. "That's part of the name change. Students can expect action within those

areas, and they can expect to be excited, empowered and developed."

The main goal of the Intercultural and Inclusion office is to support students in their identities to ensure they are successful in their endeavors, Gaddy said. She plans to equip and empower students to build their identities and confidence so they can be great in whatever field they choose, even when obstacles or oppression arise.

"Education and awareness truly allows space for students to create their own spaces," Gaddy said. "We want to give agency to our students and not do everything for them. I want to know what topics they want to hear about or learn more about, then I want them to plan their own events and even speak at those events. I want them to realize that they have the power!"

Gaddy's passion for educating and empowering students is evident. It is critical to her to develop students holistically, and that starts by having real conversations. Those conversations, she said, lead to empowering them to take action and change passiveness to activeness.

Her experience in this area comes from her time at VCU. One of her biggest accomplishments there was creating and implementing a social justice conference that was open to all students and brought in a keynote speaker each year. Students also had the opportunity to submit proposals and present at the conference as well. During her two and a half years at VCU, she successfully planned and coordinated three of these conferences.

Gaddy is now looking forward to putting her knowledge and experience to use at CCU, keeping the strategic plan always front of mind and embracing change.

"The core of this work is about people," she said. "Diversity awareness is ongoing, and when students come to CCU, they are going to have an inclusive experience. That's one of my main goals."

LOCAL EMPLOYERS OFFER CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN HVAC DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAM

Submitted by FDTC



Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) is launching a new dual enrollment program to help high school students in Florence School District One (FSD1) get a head start on well-paying careers in Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC).

The HVAC Dual Enrollment Program will allow FSD1 high school juniors and seniors to take courses at FDTC and earn college credit towards a certificate in HVAC Technology. Students who complete the program may enter the workforce immediately upon graduation or continue their education at FDTC and earn an associate degree in HVAC technology. The program also includes opportunities for full scholarships and paid internships sponsored by local HVAC business owners.

Representatives from FDTC and HVAC scholarship sponsors were available to meet with interested students and parents at West Florence, Wilson, and South Florence high schools on Aug. 7 during school registration for juniors.

The inspiration for the HVAC Dual Enrollment Program came from Angie Woodberry, local owner of Johnstone Supply, a leading wholesale distributor of HVAC equipment, parts and supplies. Woodberry says she saw a need for more students to pursue HVAC technology when her customers, local HVAC contractors, complained about not being able to find qualified employees.

“I think it is important for students and parents to know that HVAC is a very lucrative career with lots of job opportunities for trained technicians,” Woodberry said. “The job placement rate is near 100%

and job security is very high. If you ask anyone you know how he feels about having heated and cooled air in his home, you will understand the need for this industry to be fully staffed.”

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, job growth in the HVAC industry is projected to increase at 15 percent over the next eight years, which is several times higher than the national average for most other jobs. Median annual wages in 2017 were approximately \$47,000.



Woodberry says that local HVAC employers are willing to sponsor scholarships and internships for highly motivated students who show strong interest in the program, in hopes of creating a pipeline of quality employees. The scholarships will be offered through the FDTC Educational Foundation. Angela Hayek, Director of K-12 Relations at FDTC, said the program is a resource for both students and employers.

“By partnering with the high schools and members of the HVAC industry, we can work to ensure that well-paying trade jobs are filled in the Pee Dee,” Hayek said.

Students interested in applying to the HVAC Dual Enrollment Program should contact Angela Hayek, FDTC Director of K-12 Relations at 843-661-8242 or angela.hayek@fdtc.edu. Applicants should have a strong interest in hands-on learning outside the classroom. Applicants must complete an in-person interview and meet all Early College acceptance requirements.



I found a way to make a difference.
What could you do next?

Eric George
Cyber Security Specialist
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TOMORROW'S SURGEONS

Submitted MUSC Leslie Cantu



Drs. Quiana Kern, left, and Avianne Bunnell are pursuing surgical specialties at MUSC. Photos by Sarah Pack

CHARLESTON - For one resident, being a surgeon is an opportunity to “fix” people. For another, it’s a chance to develop long-term relationships with patients and nudge them onto healthier paths. And for a third, it’s helping people reconstruct their appearances after cancer. All three are young, smart and ambitious—that’s a given for any MUSC surgical resident who’s

bested dozens, if not hundreds, of other applicants to win a spot in one of the integrated programs that accept one intern each year.

They’re also all Black women, which makes them part of an even more select group. African-Americans represent between two and 10.2 percent of surgical residents, depending on the specialty, according to a January 2017 article in the *Journal of Surgical Education*.

At MUSC, medical doctors Avianne Bunnell, Kiandra Scott and Quiana Kern comprise more than 20 percent of the 2017-18 class in the three integrated surgery programs: vascular, plastic and cardiothoracic. Integrated surgery programs are five- to six-year programs that take residents directly from medical school, unlike traditional programs that require doctors to complete a five-year general surgery residency before training in a specialty.

Each is the first Black doctor accepted into her respective program, two of which are relatively new. Scott is the first resident ever in the plastic surgery integrated program, and Bunnell is only the third resident in the vascular integrated program.

Diversity is important to MUSC, which has made “Embrace Diversity and Inclusion” one of the five pillars of its Imagine MUSC

2020 strategic plan. Research has shown that diversity in the health care workforce improves access to care and leads to better patient outcomes, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges. It’s also crucial in biomedical research because researchers ask different questions depending on their own backgrounds and experiences, according to the association.

Inclusion goes beyond diversity. In “The Transformation of Academic Health Centers: Meeting the Challenges of Healthcare’s Changing Landscape,” the authors compare diversity and inclusion to hosting a party.

“It is one thing to invite people to the party, open the door, and then have them find their own way; it is quite another to be greeted warmly, welcomed inside, and shown around. Inclusion in health care workforce development means that the host institution is equipped to affirm the new student immediately as someone who belongs,” the authors say.

That feeling of immediately belonging was one thing that attracted Kern to MUSC. As a visiting medical student at another university, she felt invisible, she said. Though she was offered an interview there for residency, and it would have been convenient to remain in state, she felt she wouldn’t be happy somewhere that didn’t value her. Her interview experience was completely different at MUSC. When she interviewed, the faculty knew her background and knew who she was. Further, they were interested in getting to know her husband too.

That’s not to say there still isn’t work to be done at MUSC. The three doctors have had a mix of experiences, and they all point to a lack of diversity among physicians at the attending level that they feel the institution must address to further improve the quality of care.

But Scott, a Charleston native, thought it was important for all three to tell their stories to highlight MUSC’s commitment to diversity and to serve as role models for young Black girls.

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CULINARY STUDENT CREATING RECIPE FOR SUCCESS AT BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

Submitted by HGTC



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
OF THE GRAND STRAND

McKnight wanted to do more. She worked with ICI Executive Director Joseph Bonaparte and Boys & Girls Club CEO Dione Buonto to create an internship that would meet both her goals and the club's needs.

As nutrition and food services coordinator, McKnight is responsible for planning and executing a summer nutrition program for the children of the Boys and Girls Club. She leads three classes per day around the topics of nutrition, menu planning, reading labels, budgeting and cooking skills. She also coordinates the lunch and snack schedules for the 120 children in the summer program.



Ayanna McKnight with kids

CONWAY -For her summer internship, International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach (ICI) student Ayanna McKnight didn't want to work in a traditional restaurant kitchen. An alumni and counselor of the Boys and Girls Club of the Grand Strand,

"This internship has been a wonderful opportunity for me to return to my roots, do what I love, and use my education to make a difference in my community," McKnight says. "My goal is for this internship to become a full-time job

once I graduate from HGTC and the new Boys & Girls facility opens."

The Boys & Girls Club shares McKnight's goals.

"The culinary program at HGTC has always been a huge advocate for the Boys & Girls Club. To know that one of our own is attending the program while giving back to the club is a win-win for us," said CEO Dione Buonto. "We hope to find a way to create a full-time role for Ayanna once she graduates. We have learned that her role as the food & nutrition coordinator is essential to the success of our program."

As part of the summer curriculum, McKnight took the children on a field trip to a local grocery store, where students were able to learn first-hand how to read nutritional labels, navigate a grocery store and stick to a budget. On Aug. 3, she took the children on a tour of HGTC's Grand Strand Campus, including the International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach.



McKnight will receive course credit for her internship and plans to graduate in May 2019.

The International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach at Horry-Georgetown Technical College boasts a new state-of-the-art facility at the heart of the Grand Strand. It offers associate degree and certificate programs, including South Carolina's only Associate Degree in Baking and Pastry Arts. Internships and scholarships are available to qualifying students. Horry-Georgetown Technical College's culinary arts programs are accredited by the American Culinary Federation Educational Institute, and graduates are eligible for ACF certification.

CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY RANKED AMONG TOP 10 HBCUs FOR EIGHTH YEAR

Submitted by J. Craig Cotton, Director of Public Relations



ORANGEBURG - Clafin University's distinguished reputation for academic excellence and developing a diverse and inclusive community of globally engaged visionary leaders continues to earn the University national recognition. U.S. News and World Report placed Clafin seventh on its 2019 ranking of the nation's top 20 historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Clafin moved up two places after being ranked ninth last year. The announcement marks the eighth consecutive year that the prestigious publication has ranked Clafin among the Top 10 institutions.

HBCUs listed in U.S. News and World Report are compared only with each other for these rankings. In order to be on the list, a school must be currently designated by the U.S. Department of Education as an HBCU. To qualify for U.S. News rankings, an HBCU also must be an undergraduate baccalaureate-granting institution that enrolls primarily first-year, first-time students and must be a school that is part of the 2019 Best Colleges rankings.

Founded in 1869, Clafin will celebrate its 150th anniversary as the oldest and first HBCU in South Carolina to provide educational opportunities to all students regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnic origin. Clafin's reputation for producing outstanding STEM graduates received more attention when the Computer Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) recently granted accreditation to the University's Computer Science Program, effective retroactively to October 1, 2017. Significantly, Clafin is now one of only three private colleges or universities in the state of South Carolina with ABET accreditation. Equally significant, Clafin is among very few UNCF institutions with

an ABET-accredited computer science program.

In total, 80 HBCUs were eligible to be included on the U.S. News list; 76 of those were ranked, and four were unranked. The U.S. News rankings system rests on two pillars: quantitative and qualitative measures that education experts have proposed as reliable indicators of academic quality, and U.S. News' view of what matters in education. The indicators used to capture academic quality fall into six categories: outcome measures, assessment by administrators at peer HBCUs, faculty resources, financial resources, student excellence and alumni giving. The indicators include input measures that reflect a school's student body, its faculty and its financial resources, along with outcome measures—such as graduation rates and first-year student retention rates—that signal how well the institution educates students.

Founded in 1869, Clafin University is recognized by national publications such as U.S. News and World Report, Forbes.com and Washington Monthly as one of America's best liberal arts colleges. The University proudly serves the state of South Carolina, the nation and the world. Its beautiful historic campus is home for approximately 2,000 students from every region of the United States and more than 20 international countries. Clafin students demonstrate extraordinary achievement, distinctive confidence and a lifelong desire to transform society through visionary leadership. Its academic programs prepare students to compete and succeed in a global and technological society.

Outstanding alumni include Chief Justice of South Carolina Supreme Court (Ret) Ernest A. Finney, Jr.; renowned photographer, author and publisher Cecil Williams; internationally recognized artist Leo Twiggs; Vela McClam-Mitchell, president/CEO and owner, Georgia International Travel; and the eighth president of Clafin University, Dr. Henry N. Tisdale. For more information, visit clafin.edu or GoToClafin.com.

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SPENCER AND REVEREND MINNIE ANDERSON ESTABLISH SCHOLARSHIP

Submitted by J. Craig Cotton, Director of Public Relations



From left: Spencer and Rev. Minnie Anderson present \$20,000 check to Claflin University President Henry N. Tisdale to establish endowed scholarship for Claflin biology majors.

ORANGEBURG - When Spencer and Reverend Minnie Anderson decided to establish an endowed scholarship at Claflin University to honor the memory of their two sons, Michael Cutler and the Rev. Dr. Otis Cutler Jr., who died 28 days apart, they were guided by several significant reasons. First, they wanted to create a purposeful and enduring symbol of their sons' compassion for others and their commitment to improving the lives of everyone around them. Second, the endowment also reflects their support of academic achievement and dedication to community service. A third reason was for the scholarship to serve as a tribute in honor of their third son, Mark Cutler, a branch manager at BB&T in Beaufort.

The Spencer and Reverend Minnie Anderson Endowed Scholarship Fund was created with the Anderson's gift of \$20,000 to Claflin University. A scholarship will be awarded annually to a student from the state of South Carolina majoring in biology who maintains at minimum 3.3 grade point average. The Andersons are hopeful that the recipient will continue his or her education in medical school or participate in research that will contribute to finding a cure for terminal illnesses.

"Both Spencer and I believe science, medical research and preparing students for STEM careers are very important," said Minnie Anderson. "This endowed scholarship helps preserve our memories of Michael and Otis and helps us to move forward in a meaningful way. The scholarship will also bring increased awareness for medical research and address health-related issues."

The Anderson's endowment aligns with President Henry N. Tisdale's goal to increase funding for scholarships during his final year as the University's transformative and visionary leader. Tisdale announced last spring that he will retire on June 30, 2019, after 25 years as Claflin's eighth president.



Standing, from left: Mark, Otis and Michael Cutler. Seated center: Rev. Minnie Anderson

engineer who resided in San Jose, Calif., also planned to join them but suffered a pulmonary embolism and died on Dec. 22 in his home. "Michael and his son, Christopher, were reviewing blueprints," said Spencer, a 1999 Claflin graduate who presently serves as the interim director of auxiliary services at Claflin. "His death was sudden and

very unexpected."

Christopher, who worked closely with his father has inherited the family business, Innovative Technologies.

Minnie said that Michael had visited every continent but Antarctica. He was a single parent and he launched two non-profit organizations to benefit other single parents. He also had a special affinity for HBCU's. "Michael graduated from the University of Maryland with a bachelor's in fire protection engineering," said Minnie who has a bachelor's from the University of Baltimore and a master's from Liberty University. She is currently matriculating student in a master's degree program at Asbury Theological Seminary. "I did not graduate from Claflin, but I feel as if they have adopted me."

Otis died on January 19, 2018. He was the senior pastor at Rebirth Ministries in Baltimore, Md. He also served as a lobbyist where he fought for economic equality for minority communities. Otis was a graduate of Morgan State University where he earned a bachelor's in philosophy. He received a master's degree from the Howard University School of Divinity in religious studies and a doctoral degree in leadership from Wesley Theological Seminary. Otis attended school with the late S.C. Senator Clementa Pinckney, who was one of nine people killed in 2015 at the historic Emanuel AME Church in Charleston.

"After Spencer and I were united in holy matrimony we talked about having a purpose for our marriage, and this scholarship fulfills this desire. It also exemplifies our family's commitment to help young people achieve their goals," said Minnie. "Mark continues to carry out the vision he shared with his brothers in helping to prepare young people to be successful and productive members of their respective communities."

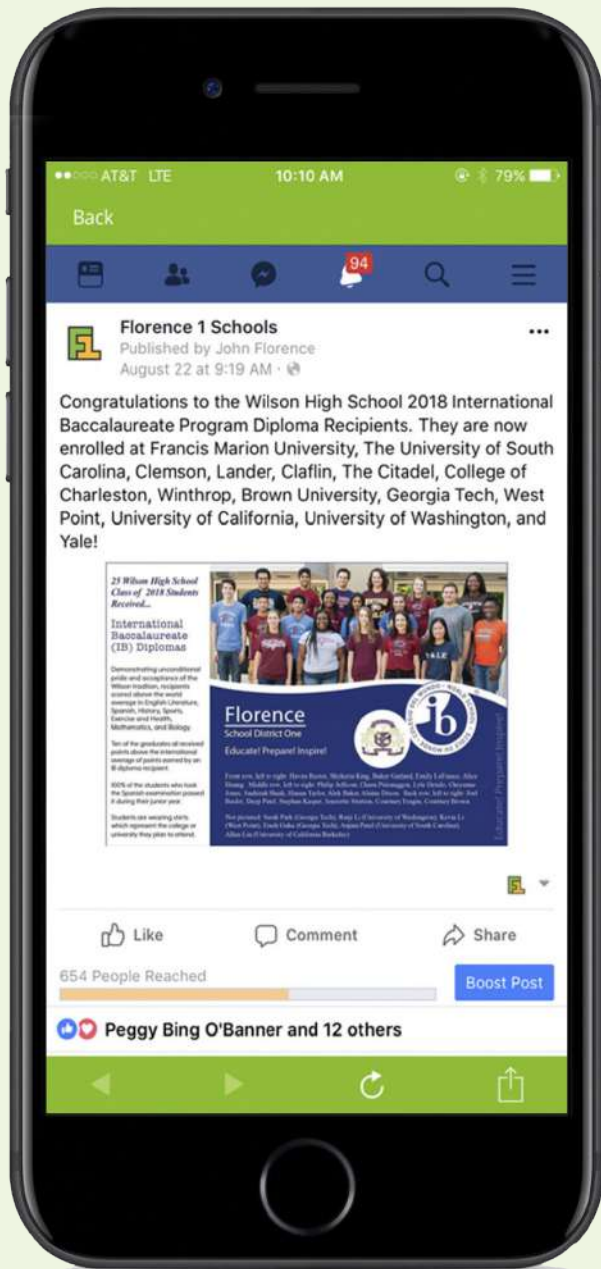
The endowment forever unites the Anderson family through the support they are providing for Claflin students and the University's emphasis on producing outstanding STEM graduates.

The Andersons stated, "We are hopeful that our contribution will inspire other alumni and Claflin supporters to establish or contribute to existing endowments."

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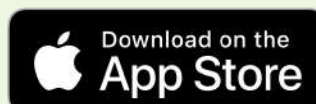
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FRANCIS MARION THOROUGHFARE RENAMED HEYWARD DRIVE

Articles submitted by FMU



Dr. Joseph E. Heyward

One of the primary thoroughfares on the Francis Marion University campus has a new name.

At a recent ceremony, University officials held a dedication ceremony for the new Heyward Drive. The naming honors Dr. Joseph E. "Joe" Heyward, who served FMU for more than 30 years as an instructor, administrator and provost.

Heyward Drive is the main east-west street on the FMU campus. It was previously called Patriot Drive.

FMU President Dr. Fred Carter called Heyward "one of the architects of the development of the university" and said that he depended upon Heyward's sound advice during the early years of his presidency.

During a ceremony in Francis Marion's Thomason Auditorium, Heyward was presented with a citation celebrating the event and a replica of the street sign bearing his name. Heyward was accompanied by his wife Evelyn and numerous friends and family members.

"I'm still overwhelmed," Heyward said. "This is such an incredible honor."

Heyward, a native of Florence, graduated from Wilson High School, received his BA from Hampton University, his Master of Mathematics degree from Morgan State University and his Ed.D from the University of South Carolina.

Heyward taught math and physics, served as an assistant principal and an assistant superintendent in Florence School District 1. Heyward served in a variety of roles at FMU during two different stints with the University. From 1983-2006 he was a vice president. Concurrently, he served as University Provost on three occasions for a total of four years.

During his career Heyward also served as an area representative for Senator Fritz Hollings and served in the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Reserve.

Heyward was active in a number of professional and community

organizations throughout his life, including Cumberland United Methodist Church, the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church, The South Carolina Housing Authority Board, the Greenwood Genetics Center Board, the Pelican House Board and, of course, FMU's African-American Faculty and Staff Coalition.

He and Evelyn have three children and six grandchildren.

FMU AMONG U.S. NEWS' "BEST COLLEGES"



Francis Marion University is once again ranked among U.S. News & World Report magazine's top Regional Universities in the South.

The 2019 edition of U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges," one of the oldest of the dozens of college rating sites on the Internet, is now available online. The information also will appear in the magazine's print editions. FMU has been a regular member of the top-ranked Regional Universities for two decades.

Dr. Fred Carter, president of Francis Marion, says the ranking confirms FMU's commitment to providing a quality education for its students.

"We are honored to be selected again this year as one of America's Best Universities by the U.S. News & World Report," Carter says. "The ranking highlights the ongoing growth of our academic programs and our commitment to instruction and research. It is really a tribute to the dedication and professionalism of our faculty."

The U.S. News & World Report rankings are divided into categories. FMU is classified as regional university, a school that provides a full range of undergraduate majors and graduate-level programs. FMU, which has long-offered master-level programs, began its first doctorate level program last year and will soon graduate its first degree holders.

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FRANCIS MARION UNIVERSITY

PROFILE OF THE SC GRADUATE

Submitted by Dr. Kandace Bethea, Superintendent



Dr. Kandace Bethea

MARION-The Marion County School District is on a mission to provide all our students with a world-class education. To that end, the district has established four areas of focus that will move the needle on student achievement:

1. Execute the Marion County School District Instructional Framework, which defines what great teaching and learning looks like
2. Promote the “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate in PK – 12
3. Build capacity in teachers and leaders
4. Cultivate a positive culture and climate in

all our schools and classrooms

Our students must be college and career ready when they graduate from high school. Several years ago, through a collaborative process, business leaders, educators, students, parents, and policy makers generated The Profile of the South Carolina Graduate, a document that outlines the knowledge, skills and characteristics needed to be a successful high school graduate. In order for our students of today to become the leaders of tomorrow, they will need a curriculum that is built from rigorous standards in language arts and math. Whether college or career bound, our students need to have a working knowledge of

Science Technology Engineering Arts Math.

Marion County School District is implementing programs that are project based and foster creativity and collaboration.

1. **Girls University** meets with two groups of middle school students on a weekly basis to give the girls tangible understanding of the confidence that comes through accomplishment as well as a framework for setting and achieving life goals through STEAM principles.

2. **Project Lead the Way** provides pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science to engage students in hands-on activities, projects, and problems designed to empower them to solve real-world challenges and inspire them to reimagine how they see themselves.

Building world-class skills doesn’t begin when students enter high school. They begin with our youngest of learners. The **Montessori** program offers an education that is based on self-directed activity, hands on learning and collaborative play. Providing this foundation to our four-, five- and six-year-old learners supports and cultivates their natural desire to acquire skills and knowledge so they can be lifelong learners. **Summer STEM Sessions** were offered to our elementary and middle school students, exposing them to project based learning activities and keeping their skills sharp during the summer hiatus from school.

Great programs, however, are not effective unless great educators implement them. The six characteristics outlined in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate must be exemplified by our teachers.

**Integrity Perseverance Self-direction Work ethic
Global perspective Interpersonal skills**

We are building capacity in our teachers and school leaders through effective Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) and implementing the Supportive Teacher Effectiveness Project (STEP) model. Our teachers meet in weekly self-directed professional development sessions to hone the skills needed to implement a world-class curriculum. We firmly believe that our teachers and school leaders deserve coaching the same way we coach our students. I continue to encourage every stakeholder in Marion County to join us as we transform our schools to places that prepare our students to be college and career ready.



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LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT – NOW

by Angela Crosland



Dr. Wanda Andrews

BISHOPVILLE - For some 36 school districts along the I-95 Corridor of South Carolina, equitable funding has been the root of what ails public education. Eight of the 36 served as the representative plaintiff districts in what was the first of five cases combined to form *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954). As one of the eight plaintiff districts, Lee County has every reason in the world to be battle weary by a struggle that spans the course of half a century. Instead, the district is becoming the lens through which the community can find immense hope.

From the student authors and award-winning staff to a board par excellence and a leadership cadre for which any superintendent would be proud, Lee County is well on its way to better.

Bishopville, where the district is located, is the county seat. The town holds much of the charm it once had in its inception in 1828. It's still the center of activity in the county. There remains a semblance of the towns and communities of Lynchburg, Elliott, Lucknow and Wisacky. There is also an abundance of youth, more than 2,000 of which are part of the public school system.

At the helm of public education in Lee County is Dr. Wanda Andrews. She's taught in high-poverty and affluent schools and has an extensive military background. Andrews has even taught in Spain and Germany. As an administrator, she has toiled to see that Lee County's youth find more than buildings with wooden desks and pencils. Meanwhile, in Lee County, she has found that down home feel characteristic of her time as a youth in Laurens. Andrews saw the dreadful side of integration and what it meant to right wrongs as it relates to education. Andrews recalls her first day of fourth grade where she was one of three to attend an all-white school.

"I can still remember all the people watching us. The teacher sat me at the back of the class, and I was seated on the last row at the end," says Andrews. "She didn't call on me. The kids didn't play with me." Though she had racial barriers to overcome, she no longer saw quite the level of poverty that walked the halls of African-American schools. Drawing from those experiences, Andrews vows to "ensure that all students are successful."

The district is well on its way to doing just that, says Andrews.

"We have made a lot of progress in the district in all areas," she says. "...the early college program, summer camps, athletics, one-to-one technology."

When she arrived in the district, one of the first things she did was revive fine arts and extracurricular activities. There was no band, and the high school football team became an award-winning one. Both are now present in the district. As for academics, Lee County Schools are making huge strides, one calendar year at a time. Rather than focus on what has been, Andrews has the district turning toward what is to come.

"This year alone we've realized over \$6 million in scholarships, 13 athletic scholarships and an award-winning band," says Andrews. "As you can see, our students and teachers are involved in activities that promote student achievement in all areas. Our district staff, school board members and community members place a high value on the education of our students."

The Board

More important than any other facet of the administrative team is composed of those who are charged with setting board policies to govern the district. Without their input, says Andrews, the district wouldn't be able to implement many of the initiatives in place now. The school board in Lee County is to be commended for their tenacity and involvement, says Andrews. "They encourage an open



Sanya Moses



Sylvia A. Scott



Dorothy Baker



Queenie Boyd



Nathaniel Brunson



Valerie Haywood



Johnny McDuffie

dialogue of the vision as each decision is made," says Andrews who adds that being heard is half the challenge in any attempt to address district matters.

Those who lead this charge and lend their ears are as follows: Sanya Moses (chairperson), representing District 7; Sylvia A. Scott (vice-chairperson) representing District 4; Queenie Boyd (secretary), representing District 3; Dorothy Baker, representing District 2; Nathaniel Brunson, representing District 6; Valerie Haywood, representing District 5; and Johnny McDuffie, representing District 1.

Many of them are long-standing and have seen the district weather some rough storms.

They've represented and furthered the best interest of the entire district, says Andrews.

"I've loved and enjoyed every place I've worked, and this is no different," says Andrews. "... wonderful leadership, kids, parents, staff and community."

The Leadership Team

Andrews has fashioned a leadership team designed to tackle the most pressing matters head-on. This cadre of seasoned professionals is not only able but willingly make themselves accessible to the community. For more information about the district, contact any of the following based on their area of expertise. Their doors are always open.

Curriculum & Instruction, Testing Grades, Report Cards, Grants
Bernard McDaniel, Executive Director of Instruction
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: donaldk@lee.k12.sc.us

Summer School, Afterschool Programs, Title I, Title II, 21st Century, Math Track Grant
Bernard McDaniel, Federal Programs/Special Projects Consultant
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: mcdanielb@lee.k12.sc.us

SIG Grant Programs
Dr. TinieceJavis, SIG Grant Coordinator
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: javist@lee.k12.sc.us

Early Childhood Instruction, Grades Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 3
Michelle McDaniel, Early Childhood Testing Coordinator
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: watsonp@lee.k12.sc.us

Discipline, Student Services
Daniel Brooks
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: brooksd@lee.k12.sc.us

Operations
Darren Wilson
Phone: (803) 484-5004
Email: wilsond@lee.k12.sc.us

Special Services
Tiffany Charles, Coordinator of Special Services
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: charlest@lee.k12.sc.us

Finance Services
Shereca Anderson, Director of Finance
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: grahaml@lee.k12.sc.us

Employee Payroll Services
Jonita Pearson, Payroll Specialist
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Email: pearsonj@lee.k12.sc.us

Personnel Services
Dr. TinieceJavis, Director of Personnel
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: javist@lee.k12.sc.us

Employee Benefits
Willistine Simon, Benefits Coordinator
Phone: (803) 484-5327
Email: simonw@lee.k12.sc.us

Transportation Services, School Buses
Pamela Wessinger, Director of Transportation
Phone: (803) 428-2100
Email: wessingerp@lee.k12.sc.us

School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, Child Nutrition
Shirley Joe, Director of Child Nutrition
Phone: (803) 428-4010
Email: joes@lee.k12.sc.us

WILLIAMS AND WILSON INTERSECT AT MATCHING DESTINATIONS

by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Angel Williams

Progressing through the ranks of a company is not always easy, and no two individuals' paths are ever the same. But when inspiration, drive and perseverance are a part of each person's life, they are both bound to intersect at the top of their game. This can all be said of our October issue's cover story on Lance Wilson and Angel Williams, supervisors at Ruiz Food Products Inc. who—though they have different backgrounds—are still similar in several ways.

Angel Williams joined Ruiz Foods on April 18, 2016, as a machine operator and is now a swing shift supervisor. "I have had an exciting career in Florence, from Maytag to Honda to Heinz, even GE, but I have found home at Ruiz Foods. At Ruiz Foods, I have the opportunity to learn and grow in my job, and I really like that."

Like Ruiz Foods, both supervisors are grounded in family and have diverse backgrounds. Originally from Patterson, N.J., Williams currently lives in Lake City and is a former Sunday school teacher with over 12 years of experience in manufacturing. As an African American woman in leadership, this lover of family said her 79-year-old grandmother Eddie Mae is her "teacher" and her inspiration.

"All I know, I have learned from her, and she still continues to inspire me...an amazing woman, she has taught me to be confident, independent, to do the very best I can always, and to treat everyone I meet with respect while embracing diversity and inclusion. Everyone has something to offer. Everyone has something to bring to the table. Everyone has something to contribute."

Growing up, using her voice to contribute was a barrier that Williams had to overcome. "I'm basically a very shy person, so I've learned from my Eddie Mae that I can't be shy if I want my dreams to come true. I've learned to communicate, to speak up, to look forward and to dream big."

Pushing through the shyness, Williams has now accomplished a great deal, including being promoted twice at Ruiz Foods since 2016. "My greatest accomplishment so far is where I am in my job. I have worked hard to get to this point, and I am proud I have gotten this far, this fast. Ruiz Foods is great because they provide opportunities for learning and growing. They believe in diversity and in each of us. They call us 'team members'—I like that—and want to see us grow and succeed."

If you, too, want to be successful in life but do not think it is possible, Williams said, "Don't think that way. It's defeating. Instead, never give up. Don't doubt yourself. The attempt to achieve is the success because it's the learning about yourself. Always do your best. Stay strong, and go for your dreams. They are possible."

As you can see, Williams' mind frame regarding diversity and inclusion (D&I) as well as being successful is perfectly aligned with the practices of Ruiz Foods, an organization known and respected for its D&I principles and love for seeing its people succeed.

Lance Wilson is a quality assurance supervisor in the receiving department at Ruiz Foods. He has both a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management and a Master of Science Degree in Agribusiness from South Carolina State University. He said he is enjoying learning

more about the science of microbiology needed in the Q.A. field. But on a personal level, he also enjoys high school and college football as well as

dabbling into the science of crypto-zoology.

Being a supervisor is definitely not all to know about this hardworking self-starter who, like Williams, also worked his way through the ranks. "When starting my career at Ruiz Foods, I was a contributor in implementing the startup of the Florence facility. As the company progressed, I was assigned the tasks of supervising the Quality Team's day-to-day functions for the manufacturing and receiving/shipping areas of the facility. I also took on the responsibility of instructing our facility's GMP, HACCP and Siemens Application Training classes. In absence of the Q.A. manager, I was asked to fill an interim management role to assist the facility with quality concerns."

In addition to now serving in the role of quality assurance supervisor, Wilson is "working to get the Florence facility prepared for its first BRC audit and also completing annual HACCP& GMP training." He added, "I have facilitated classroom training, led cross-functional committees, produced quality trending reports and implemented developmental programs that motivated team members to achieve the best possible outcomes."

With the holidays quickly approaching, both Williams and Wilson are looking forward to spending time with family and friends, which they value and accredit for helping them to achieve this level of success in life.



Lance Wilson

Wilson said that his parents inspire him. "My parents have been the most influential in all aspects of my personal and professional life. They have been together for 40 years," said Wilson, who identifies as African American but has recently learned he has a Native American heritage as well. "From them, I have learned the importance of keeping God First; respect; listening to what others have to say; the importance of treating people the way you want to be treated; helping others and being part of a team; and a belief

in the importance of diversity. And what I like about working at Ruiz Foods is the fact they have the same beliefs, the same philosophy, and the same values as what my parents taught me, by example. In fact, I enjoyed my three-year anniversary at Ruiz Foods on September 8. At Ruiz Foods, diversity is important, as is teamwork, respect, integrity, safety, innovation and quality."

"My greatest accomplishment is being a part of Ruiz Foods in Florence as they started from no production in a brand new facility to saleable production shipping to customers. I am motivated each day by the opportunity to learn, the opportunity to better myself, and the opportunity to help others."

Another similarity between Wilson and Williams is that they are not only inspired by family, but they also work hard to help others succeed as well. Even when asked for his definition of success, Wilson stated, "I believe I have a fairly simple definition: identifying goals and striving to reach them as well as seeing others succeed in the identification and accomplishment of their goals."

Wilson wants others to realize that they, too, can accomplish their goals. He offers them the following advice: "First, realize it is possible. Be a leader—not a follower. Believe in yourself, and pave your own path."

Wilson and Williams have blazed their paths and made Ruiz Foods proud. Back in 2015 Kim Ruiz Beck, the chairman of Ruiz, told us at Diversity Works Magazine© that she believed the Ruiz Foods culture would "continue to attract some of the very best people" on our coast. Angel Williams and Lance Wilson are two of those individuals, so we join with Ruiz in celebration of their success and thank them both for embracing our October 2018 cover.



A SURVIVOR SPEAKS ON NOT LETTING CANCER SILENCE HER

by Tameeka Epps



Kimberly Brigman-Driggers

LATTA - "Survivor" is defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary as a person who copes well with difficulties in his or her life or a person who remains alive after an event in which others have died. A survivor is one who chooses life over and over again in spite of his or her situation. Kimberly Brigman-Driggers is a survivor who beat breast cancer by focusing on what cancer cannot do rather than what it is capable of doing.

Kimberly Brigman-Driggers was 41 years old when she was performing a routine self-examination and felt a lump in her right breast. The date was June 5, 2014--a date that has become as significant to her as her birthday. Driggers acted fast made an appointment with her family doctor who then scheduled her for a mammogram. She was instructed to have a biopsy. However, she opted out of a needle biopsy, ultrasound and other diagnostic tests and chose to move forward with lumpectomy surgery where the tumor and surrounding tissues would be removed. "I just knew whatever it was, I wanted it out," recalled Driggers.



Kimberly, the 2018 Relay for Life Event Leader

Within 48 hours, Driggers would receive the diagnosis that it was cancer. "My life literally flashed before my eyes. A second surgery was scheduled to remove lymph nodes to test if the cancer had spread. I am thankful I found the lump as early as I did before it had a chance to spread. I did test HER2-positive for Stage 1 Metastatic breast cancer, a very aggressive form of breast cancer which has a high percentage rate of returning without treatments."

Driggers made the decision to move forward as quickly as possible. "A 'Fight it. Let's Beat it. I got this' attitude was the approach I took. Full of optimism while not having a clue about the journey, I was about to embark upon, I put full faith and trust in my doctors and caregivers and had a team of prayer warriors. I wholeheartedly believe God gives the toughest battles to the strongest soldiers. It was my turn to fight and fight I did," exclaimed Driggers.

Chemotherapy was the next phase on her road to recovery September 24, 2014, (her daddy's birthday). She took the first of many trips to Coastal Cancer Center in Murrells Inlet/Conway. Driggers endured 18 months of chemotherapy with 30 radiation treatments five days a week for six straight weeks. There were countless CT scans, PET scans, MRIs and trips to Duke Medical Center when tests results came back suspicious. When Driggers lost her hair, she remembered cancer cannot shatter hope. When she lost weight and her nails, she remembered cancer cannot silence courage or invade the soul, so she continued to fight.

November 11, 2015, was her last chemotherapy treatment. However, three months later she had to have a full hysterectomy. Driggers continues monthly visits to the Cancer Center with CT scans every three months, and for the next seven years she has to take a daily pill of Tamoxifen.

"Cancer showed up quickly and has left me with many scars physically and emotionally, but it was not a death sentence!"



Kimberly the hunter

Driggers was employed with First Citizens Bank in Kingstree at the time of diagnosis and continued to work through treatment. She relocated to her hometown of Latta in Dillon County when her position with First Citizens Bank was moved to Atlanta, Ga. during a merger. Since her return to Latta, she has secured employment with Anderson Brothers Bank and has poured her heart into volunteering and fundraising for The American Cancer Society.

"I had the honor of being Dillon Counties Relay for Life event leader for 2018 with the guidance of Chinel Boateng, senior community manager with the American Cancer Society. We were able to raise \$70,570, surpassing the goal of \$57,000, thanks to the efforts of those in the communities."

Driggers is enjoying her country life, living on a cattle farm in Latta, deer hunting every chance she gets, visiting the beach--her happy place--while cheering on her Dallas Cowboys, win, lose or draw.

"I will forever focus on what cancer cannot do rather that what it can, as I live with the realization cancer could return, and if or when it does...I'll be ready to fight some more...I am a Survivor!"



HOW ONE WOMAN CONTINUES THE DAILY FIGHT

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Melva Wilson

October has been designated as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This annual international health campaign organized by major breast cancer charities aims to increase awareness of the disease while raising funds for research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and cure. The campaign also offers information and support to those affected by breast cancer.

Breast cancer starts when cells within the breast begin to grow out of control. These cells usually form a tumor

that will often be seen on an x-ray or felt as a lump during a self examination. The tumor is malignant (cancerous) if the cells can grow into (invade) surrounding tissues or spread (metastasize) to distant areas of the body.

Every person's story is different as to how the disease affects him or her, and his or her process to remission or to a cure differs as well. Melva Wilson's story began in March of 2012 when she was working a full-time job and working as caregiver to her husband who suffered a series of strokes. As caregiver for her husband, they endured 52 weeks of physical therapy in hopes of him returning to work. Unfortunately, when they were given the news he would not be able to return to work or to the pulpit, their world shifted once again.

While caring for her husband, Wilson started to experience pain in her shoulder, which she wrote off as her muscles being tired and overworked. Yearly mammograms were a constant for her. However, she neglected her own care while caring for her husband and missed her yearly appointment in 2012.

In March of 2013 Wilson made an appointment with her primary care physician who diagnosed her with stage 4 breast cancer. "After several scans and tests, I was told by my doctor the cancer had metastasized with spots on my brain, spine, hip and liver. I was devastated, but I am grateful for my sister who encouraged me to stay positive and seek a second opinion from John Hopkins Medical Center. The doctor from JHMC confirmed saying the cancer was likely in my body for some time and had not been discovered sooner due to dense breast tissue. I knew I had to remain faithful and put up the fight of my life if I was to win my battle."

Wilson started her chemotherapy treatment while employed full time and working as a caregiver to her husband. Her treatments were aggressive, coupled with weekly doctor visits, which took a toll on her physical and mental wellbeing. She was forced to retire as the side-effects of the treatment were overwhelming. "I handled the side effects well except for losing my hair. That was the worst part of the treatment."

Wilson found herself needing to apply for public assistance to offset the costs of prescriptions needed for herself and her husband. "During the month I lost my job, I had not been approved for disability or social security, but I was approved for Medicaid. I have seven different prescriptions with one price at \$610 a month, and my husband has 23. Without the assistance of Medicaid, I am not sure if we could continue our treatments, but in 2014 I went into remission."

Cancer is a life changing diagnosis, and for some it is a battle they are not able to win. Melva Wilson stands on the victorious side of the diagnosis. "I cannot say that I am cured, but I can say that I am a survivor. My faith in God, Jesus and my spiritual background give me the strength I need to fight each and every day."

STAND WITH MOLLY AND OTHERS TO ELIMINATE HPV

by Chinel Boateng



Imagine if we never lost another loved one to HPV cancers. Today that is a possibility. Molly, a 19-year-old young lady from Florence, captured my attention as she arrived wearing a "SURVIVOR" t-shirt at a local Cancer Survivor's Gala. Throughout the night Molly and I talked, and she shared her cancer journey with me.

Molly was a rebellious youth and was promiscuous at an early age. By the time she turned 13, she had already lost her virginity, unbeknownst to her

mother--who, by the way--was raising Molly alone. When her mother suspected that she was sexually active, she insisted Molly receive the HPV vaccine. At this point, Molly was 15. So, instead of the recommended two doses for youth age 11-12, Molly needed three doses of the HPV vaccine. She remembered receiving the first and second doses but said she never returned for the third. At 16, Molly was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Her friends treated her like an outcast. They were naïve in thinking they could "catch cancer." It was too much for Molly to endure, so she dropped out of high school.

With the support of her mother and grandparents, Molly successfully completed treatment for her cancer. However, doctors are unsure if she can ever have children. She wishes she had taken the full recommended dose of the HPV vaccine and wanted to share her story so other Mollies AND Melvins and their parents are aware of the HPV vaccine. Share this story with someone you know. You might just save a life.

The American Cancer Society leads the fight for a world without cancer and has launched a global public health campaign to eliminate vaccine-preventable HPV cancers, starting with cervical cancer. Every year in the United States, more than 31,500 men and women are diagnosed with cancers caused by HPV (American Cancer Society, Inc., 2018).

The human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common infection that causes six types of cancer: cervical, vulva, vagina, penile, anal, and oropharynx (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). In fact, nine out of 10 adults – both men and women – are infected with HPV at some point in their lives. Fortunately, we have all the tools needed to eliminate HPV related cancers (or cervical cancer). Nearly all cases of cervical cancer are caused by HPV. Through vaccination of young adolescents and screening of women, we can eliminate HPV related cancers (American Cancer Society, Inc., 2018).

HPV vaccine is cancer prevention. The vaccine is proven to be safe, effective and provide lasting protection. The best ways to fight against HPV cancer are to educate yourself about HPV at www.cancer.org/HPV, make sure that the young people in your life are getting vaccinated and the women in your life are getting screened.

To see a world free of HPV cancer (or cervical cancer), we must act now. We need strong partners to stand with us.



I VOLUNTEER TO DRIVE, BUT I'M THE ONE WHO GETS THE PICK-ME-UP.

Volunteer drivers are needed for the Road To Recovery program.



Road To Recovery®

TOGETHER, WE ARE STRONGER THAN CANCER.

One of the biggest roadblocks to cancer treatment is transportation. That's why the American Cancer Society Road To Recovery Program provides patients in need with free rides to treatment. And we need your help.

Our volunteers have provided hundreds of thousands of rides for patients, but the need for drivers continues to accelerate.

As a leader in your community, you're positioned to inspire others to become volunteer drivers.

So please, help us spread the word about the importance of giving patients a much-needed ride to their cancer-related medical appointments.

Encourage your connections in the community to become involved; they may be surprised by what they get in return.

Drivers need:

- ✓ A good driving record
- ✓ A current driver's license
- ✓ Proof of adequate automobile insurance
- ✓ Access to a safe and reliable vehicle
- ✓ Schedule availability
- ✓ Regular desktop, laptop, or tablet computer access

**Additional screening and training will be required; contact us for more details.*

To volunteer, or learn how your organization can get involved, visit cancer.org/drive or call your American Cancer Society at **1-800-227-2345**.

RURAL CONNECTIONS

Articles by Jennifer Robinson



Barbara Black

JOHNSONVILLE - We know that a nest is where a bird develops in order to grow and one day flies away. This is symbolic of the mission of a nonprofit in Johnsonville called Lydia's Nest that was established in 2015. The founder of this organization is Barbara Black, a wife and mother who is a native of Johnsonville. Under this organization are several programs: The Food Bank Service, Healthcare, Homeless Outreach, Services for Cancer patients, Lydia's Closet, Single Mom Services and Life Skill Classes.

"The only thing that encouraged me to create Lydia's Nest is one simple word: 'love.' It's a small four-letter word, but really it is very big word. I have a love for people in general, and I truly count that as a blessing because that lets me know that I am a child of God and one of his disciples," Black stated. "All of my divisions within my organization are from personal experience. I became focused on women in abusive situations because my sister was murdered at the age of twenty-five by her boyfriend at the time, which she was trying to leave. That stuck with me for a while and became a passion of mine to try to help women who are in an abusive situation and to try to help get them out."

"The Single Mom's Ministry is personal because I came from a single parent home. There were nine of us in my family, and I am the youngest. I watched my mother work hard every day to make sure the bills were paid, to have food on the table, clothes on our backs, and a roof over our heads. I, too, became a single mom and desperately needed

the help of others. Every community has single moms who need encouragement, support, and often practical assistance like I did. There were people that helped me, and I want to pay it forward. It is possible that minimizing a family's need for government assistance through education and opportunities can empower families. I know I have the ability to radically change the lives of single parents, and I plan to be actively involved. I want my organization to be one that teaches and encourages single mothers to serve within their communities. The healthcare portion of the organization comes from my background as a nurse. I have tried several career opportunities in my life, but the only thing that I kept coming back to is nursing. The food-bank and clothing closet are a part of the agape love that I have for the needy. I will always have a merciful spirit to those that are less fortunate than I am."

Helping others with shelter is important because "my house burned down in 2016," says Black. "I lost everything, even my office at the time because it was attached to my house. I can remember as a teenager, our home burned down, and we were all living wherever we could. But I did not remember feeling like the way I did when my house burnt down two years ago. I didn't really comprehend what it meant to be homeless, but here I was trying to help the homeless. Now I know what it's like to have your children living somewhere else, and you and your spouse living out of a shed/barn with no running water or anything."

Barbara Black's strength and the experience she gained from various facets of life have blessed Johnsonville and surrounding areas with Lydia's Nest. If you are interested in helping this organization, visit <https://lydiasnest.wixsite.com/helpcenter> or call 843-489-6007.

SELF CARE IS NOT SELFISH



Martha Stewart

Domestic Violence Awareness Month is upon us and we wanted to reserve space to not only acknowledge those who are experiencing domestic violence, but also to support those who have taken the steps to journey toward safety and healing. A part of the healing process is recognizing the importance of self-care. Self-care is simply taking steps to ensure wellness for the journey to healing. Survivors, most often those who are women, tend to put others before themselves. They may forget that if they do not participate in activities that encourage wellness, challenges may arise in their efforts to help others. There are many activities

that promote self-care: yoga, meditation, counseling, healthy eating lifestyle, exercise, etc. We also find that working with a therapist to learn effective coping skills is important to overall healing.

Martha Stewart, owner of Stewart Behavioral Health, a local counseling agency in Florence shares about the importance of self-care following trauma. In her interview with Diversity Works, she discussed her beginnings as a counselor and opening up an agency that helps post-trauma survivors as a part of its services.

Stewart stated, "Stewart Behavioral Health was a dream of mine since my graduation from Francis Marion University in December 2007. It took a while to get it started, but when it began, it did not stop. The agency started with me as counselor and my daughter, Randa Abbott, as billing assistant. In 2016, we opened our office on Dargan St. with me and three counselors. We also added an administrative staff. Now, we have five counselors with a full support staff. The purpose of Stewart Behavioral Health is to help the people of Florence County be the best they can be. We work with people of all ages and walks of life. The Stewart Behavioral Health team is dedicated to the people it serves. We not only see people in our office on Dargan St., but also those in the community who cannot always get to the office. The therapists are

committed to the field of counseling and are passionate in the work they do."

"Personally, I have worked with trauma survivors for over twelve years. Not only have the clients benefited from the focus of therapy, I have as well. I gain as much, if not more, from each client that walks into the office. Often survivors experience hyper-arousal, where they feel hyper aware of every stimuli (ex. sound, sight, light, darkness) and often find it difficult to concentrate. They may experience a heightened sense of anxiety, increase in nightmares and intrusive thoughts. After a thorough intake and assessment, questions will be asked about the trauma they experienced and explored with the client. The client will then be taught various coping skills such as deep-breathing, relaxation, and mindfulness techniques."

"Deep-breathing and relaxation brings awareness to the breath and how it flows through the body. Concentrating on the breath as it comes and goes through the body can calm the body and brain. This practice allows for the brain to relax and focus on something other than trauma-related issues. Mindfulness is being aware of one's own thoughts, feelings, sensations and behaviors. Mindfulness will help the client experience changes in how their brain functions in controlling emotional regulation and concentration. These coping skills are beneficial to those experiencing depression and anxiety that is often symptomatic to the post traumatic experience. The self-care techniques are explored early in treatment to assist the client in practicing self-care immediately. The client will be encouraged to take care of everyday personal hygiene, healthy eating, exercise or engaging in fun activities while getting necessary rest and sleep. Clients are encouraged to spend time with people they like, pray, laugh, maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life. Therapy will encourage the client to look beyond the trauma and focus on positive aspects of their lives. Having a safe, supportive environment in addition to therapy is very important to those who have experienced."

Stewart Behavioral Health is located at 525 South Dargan St., Florence, S.C., 29506. For appointments call 843-407-5419.

MCCALL DISCUSSES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

by Ta' Meeka Epps



Martha McCall

Domestic violence has been the “silent secret” and played a major role in the instability of families for decades. This silent secret does not discriminate but has permeated every barrier that has kept society separated. Victims of diverse socioeconomic status, ethnic background, gender, race, spiritual denomination, sexual orientation, and/or educational attainment have fallen prey to domestic assault and family violence. Children have been instructed that “what happens in the home, stays in the home.” Their secret

followed them into adulthood and oftentimes throughout their lives. Some victims vowed to be different, and others adopted the same behaviors that they detested as a child. Ashamed to reveal the abuse, victims are sometimes compelled to live physically and emotionally traumatized lives. Understanding the effects of domestic violence and how it affects every aspect of a person’s being necessitates bringing awareness and providing support to victims who feel helpless. Because domestic violence takes many different forms, it is important that victims are able to recognize when they are in a potentially/violent domestic relationship, identify signs of abuse and locate community resources for assistance.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) evolved from the “Day of Unity” held in October 1981 and was conceived by the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. The intent was to connect advocates across the nation with others who were doing the work to end violence against women and their children. The Day of Unity soon became an entire week devoted to a range of activities conducted at the local, state and national level.

In October of 1987, the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month was observed. That same year marks the initiation of the first national domestic violence toll-free hotline. In 1989, the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 101-112 designating October of that year as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (Retrieved from <https://nrcdv.org/dvam/DVAM-history>).

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, many organizations, communities and individuals plan activities, workshops and trainings to spread awareness about domestic violence as an approach to reducing domestic violence and help survivors connect with support systems locally, at the state level and nationwide.



The Pee Dee Coalition, a non-profit organization, hosts various events throughout the Pee Dee region to promote awareness about domestic violence and to reduce family violence. The non-profit responds to domestic and sexual assault hospital calls; provides direct services to victims through crisis/trauma counseling, support groups and follow-ups after initial contact; assists with obtaining an

Order of Protection and advocacy; and offers support to victims through the criminal justice process. The Pee Dee Coalition also has an 24/7 crisis hotline and emergency shelter.

They serve all populations and victims of domestic and sexual assault (elderly, children, disabled, LGBTQ, and prison population). They provide direct services/trainings in the following counties: Florence, Marion, Williamsburg, Chesterfield, Marlboro, Darlington and Dillon counties.

Martha McCall has been working as director of Community Victim Services, Outreach and Training since August 2018. However, she has

been serving the community throughout her entire professional career. As director of Community Services, she assists in the provision of, or arranging for, services to victims and their families to include crisis intervention, referral, advocacy, telephone counseling and follow-up. She promotes the Pee Dee Coalition’s services to other agencies including law enforcement, prosecution, social services, mental health, drug and alcohol agencies and medical facilities. As director of Outreach and Training, she is also responsible for ensuring continued working relationships with other community agencies and maintaining knowledge of the communities and organizations of the servicing counties/circuits including agencies, non-profits, civic organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, and schools to support both services to victims and a venue for community education/training opportunities.

Plans for the Pee Dee Coalition are to continue to provide victims with exceptional service and collaborate with other community supporters to address victim needs. They would like to hear and see success stories where victims who received their services are empowered to take control of their lives and make decisive decisions that will enhance their lives and the community.

Martha McCall is married to Sterling McCall. They have five children and 10 grandchildren and reside in Florence.

PEE DEE COALITION PREVENTION PROGRAM



Redmond Smith

The Pee Dee Coalition is a nonprofit, volunteer organization dedicated to the reduction of sexual assault, family violence and child abuse and to the needs of victims. The Pee Dee Coalition provides victim services to Florence, Marion, Darlington, Marlboro, Dillon, Williamsburg and Chesterfield counties.

One of the main events that organization participates in is Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month in October. During this month locally, the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault labors to celebrate survivors, honor past victims that survived, raise awareness and confirm its commitment to preventing violence in the community.

Classes, presentations and a number of other events throughout the Coalition’s service area are planned for the month of October and Redmond encourages the community’s participation.

Events are held throughout the community to encourage involvement in their efforts. One such event held recently is the Clergy men’s roundtable discussion on primary prevention facilitated by Redmond Smith, director of Prevention, Outreach, and Training. “The roundtable focused on providing training for church clergy members on how to engage members of their respective congregation who have been victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The roundtable also focused on what type of resources are available to assist clergy members once they have identified individuals who fit this category. Finally, we focused on what type of formal training we can provide to help clergy members become more aware of issues dealing with sexual assault and domestic violence,” said Smith.

In addition to the Clergy men’s roundtable, there are other prevention programs that are at the forefront of preventing domestic violence and sexual assault. These programs include Reducing Our Assault Risk (ROAR), Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) and Alternatives to Violence (ATV).

Reducing Our Assault Risk (ROAR) is a program that provides teens and young adults with practical ways for reducing one’s risk of victimization. Usually, presentation topics include sexual assault, date

PEE DEE COALITION CONT'D

rape and dating violence. Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) is a program of realistic defense tactics for women. RAD teaches prevention, risk reduction and avoidance while progressing to the basics of self-defense. This program is dedicated to training women in self-defense against various type of assault by utilizing easy, effective and proven techniques. This program is designed to provide women with the knowledge to make educated decisions about resistance. To ensure the most efficient training is conducted all instructors are RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) certified. "It is only open to women at this time," said Smith.

Alternatives to Violence (ATV) program is an offender focused program that teaches alternatives to the anger, rage, frustration, fear, isolation and desperation that are apart of abusive relationships. ATV is dedicated to reducing domestic violence through group counseling and community education. Individuals are required to meet for two hours for 26 educational sessions. Alternatives to Violence program is certified by the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

One of the main goals of Domestic Violence Awareness month is engaging the community through awareness and letting them know we are a valuable resource for individuals who have been victims of domestic victims. As a victim service provider, I want victims to know that I am listening and understand their needs especially as a male service provider within the Pee Dee region.

For additional information, contact Redmond Smith or the Coalition by email at rsmith@peedeecoalition.org or by phone at 843-669-4694. Visit the Coalition's website at peedeecoalition.org for a listing of events in the area.

PRINGLE AND ADVOCACY GROUP IMPACTING SC

Articles by Tory White



Jonathan Pringle

MARION- Meet "J Money": songwriter, singer, rapper, painter, teacher, traveler, janitor, Olympian and advocate for the disabled. His real name is Jonathan Pringle. Pringle is a successful member of society, full of life, adventure and vigor. He is also disabled.

Pringle currently serves as the president of Individuals Motivating People to Achieve Change Together (IMPACT) of South Carolina. IMPACT advocates for the rights of the disabled and encourages a positive change in their lives.

Pringle teaches classes around the state to educate those with disabilities to advocate for them to have the right to live as everyone else does. Each year on Disability Day the group rallies on the steps of the State House to push for disabled individuals to have the right to date, work and live on their own.

IMPACT SC is the state of South Carolina's self advocate group that advocates independence, just as others. IMPACT has been around for over 11 years and is composed of individuals with disabilities from around the state of South Carolina. The group has approximately 40 members who go to trainings and provide training to other self-advocates helping them speak up and improve their public speaking skills.

The IMPACT Leadership class that Pringle teaches focuses on the following subjects: who I am; communication; feelings and values; self-advocacy and leadership; rules and laws; rights and responsibilities; team building and public speaking. This is an eight-week class, and students graduate at the end of the class with a certificate.

Pringle also participates in the Special Olympics with basketball, bowling, softball, track and field and volleyball



Jojo Performs

events. Traveling and meeting new people with the Special Olympics in Columbia, Greenville and Cummings, Ga. was a wonderful experience. He has traveled to a Self Advocates Becoming Empowered conference at the Sheraton in Birmingham, Ala., which is the national conference for self-advocates all over the world. There were approximately 700 people from all over the world, including the Island of Quam, in attendance. It was informative and very resourceful.

Despite not being independent, able to drive or having job opportunities, Pringle is proud of the work he does. He enjoys helping others and making a difference by teaching the leadership classes. Being a part of the painting enclave is fun for him. The flight to Alabama was a memorable treat and experience for him. The purpose of the songs he writes and performs is to uplift the self-perception of the disability community as well as in the eyes of the world.

Pringle strongly recommends working and teaching others not just to the disabled community but to all people because it a great experience. He also wants people with disabilities to know that if they keep their head up and put God first that they can do whatever their heart desires. If you would like more information about IMPACT SC and advocate opportunities, please call MDDSN at 843-423-4484, ext. 117, or visit the website impactinsc.com

MEET AN AWARD-WINNING LOCAL ARTIST



Jonathan Pringle

MARION-Barbara Grant may have a disability, but she is also an award-winning artist. Known for her unique drawings and painting, Grant has gained recognition throughout the state of South Carolina. She entered the Florence DDSN art competition several years back and won the first prize of \$1000 and entered the next year and won the second prize of \$500. She has been featured in the Artsfield Art Competition, Deanna's Bath and Boutique of Lake City and the South Carolina State Fair. She is known for her quick, colorful and exceptional presentations.

Grant spends her days providing janitorial services at the Marion County Disability Center. She has been commissioned to do the art layouts for the center's seasonal bulletin boards on a yearly basis. In addition, she has sold numerous pieces to the Marion Dillon Disability and Special Needs Board, and her designs can be seen throughout the halls of both the Marion and Dillon centers. Her work has made it to the walls of the Department of Disability and Special Needs state office in Columbia. Grant is willing to personalize her drawings and draw what you want to fit your needs.

Grant enjoys doing her artwork as well as cleaning at the center. Drawing and painting fill her with great pride. She says the designs just come to her mind, and she transposes them to canvas. Her work at the center is a paid position, and she sells her artwork but says she doesn't have enough money to purchase supplies for her passion.

Grant enjoys being at the center and encourages other to attend as well. Working there is fun, and having the venue to work on and display her art is a marvelous experience. To view and purchase her work you can call the MDDSN at 843-423-4484 ex. 117.



Barbara's Art Work



GAME CHANGERS SAYING "NO MORE" TO BULLYING

Submitted by Shasta Partee



Shasta Partee

My daughter Nae'Mya Shabazz was sick for almost a year before being diagnosed with Primary Generalized Dystonia, a condition in which you do not receive enough dopamine to the Basal Ganglia (middle region of the brain). Her condition was caused by fatigue and stress, so for almost 10 hours every night she had painful involuntary movements until her body shut down and she became wheelchair bound. Some people describe it as Multiple Sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease mixed. She was in and out of the hospital and was

unable to attend school.

After receiving her diagnosis on Nov. 18, 2015, at Wake Forest Baptist Health and with the help of Greenwood Genetics in Florence, we finally had a bit of relief. Almost 120 days later, my daughter was out of the wheelchair and was ecstatic God had showed his hands yet again. Her first mission was to return to her friends at school. She used her wheelchair for the first couple of years because just walking long distances made her sick. Her homebound teachers Mrs. Livingston and Mrs. Nesmith were so excellent and compassionate. But her 7th grade year was when everything changed.

I was so busy trying to rebuild the life that was altered over the past year that I missed all the signs. Her foot had started turning to the side, her hair had fallen out, she couldn't sleep, and she didn't want to go to school because kids talked about her, hit her, and threatened her. She had told staff, but it did not stop. I reached out to principals, teachers, and even counselors, but it continued. Then my daughter went back into remission and became wheelchair bound again. When her hair fell out she was so embarrassed to go to school that she wore a hoodie or a scarf. The doctor wrote her a prescription to wear it, but bullies pulled it off, threatened her, and called her a boy and other mean names. This went on for months.



Left to right: Na'Mya, Naeem and Shasta

On April 12 not only had they not stopped the bullying, but they had also given the bullies power. On that day of my daughter being bullied in the cafeteria, when I arrived to the school, I observed about 10 teachers, an assistant principal, and SRO officer who had done nothing once again. I proceeded to my daughter's table and told her just to sit down and eat. Her father spoke to the assistant principal until the assistant principal came over.

We then walked outside to the courtyard, and I stood where I could overlook the area, and her father followed. I couldn't believe what I saw: the bullies went to my daughter and said something right in front of me. The principal then walked over to me because my daughter was crying and had come to us. I pointed out how this was happening right in front of the principal and asked what they were going to do, so he asked me to come to his office to talk about the incident. I explained to my daughter that I had to leave, but her dad said that he would stay. I assured her I would return right after my appointment, and before I left I spoke with the assistant principal. I returned to the school a few hours later. My ex-husband had not heard anything back from the principal, so I assumed they would call. After I spoke to the receptionist, we both left.

The next day when I returned to the school to pay for a consumer science doll my daughter approached me and explained that the girls

had entered into her classroom and had pushed her. I then spoke to another assistant principal about the incident, and she assured me that she would handle it.

But on Saturday cops were at my door with an arrest warrant stating I had made terroristic threats to blow up the school, had assaulted students, had disturbed a school, had threatened parents and had said I had 27 or 37 cousins in Florence who were going to go beat the bullies up. None of that ever happened. I was from up North and didn't even have family in the area. Neither did I have bombs to make a threat, nor did I say anything to anyone's child. Once some of the officers knew that I wasn't a terrorist, they began to leave, and one reassured the others that I had children and could turn myself in the next day, which I did.



Shasta and daughter Na'Mya

When I arrived at 6:30 a.m., I couldn't believe I was read my Miranda Rights, cuffed, and placed in the back of a police car--the very thing I preached to my children about not doing. The night before I had done enough crying. I am a business owner, singer, Christian, and most importantly, a role model for my children and others. I could not believe I was there, giving those bullies power.

After that day, the bullying continued, but I was at the end of my rope. With my son in the background, my daughter and I made a video that has gone viral, reaching over 500,000 views. On May 25, we also held a protest with the help of national and local organizations because I'm fighting a system that cares more about its reputation than the truth and safety of our children. We have shared our experience on news stations and plan to continue to share it with the world. We will collaborate with other organizations in a peaceful march at the end of October to say NO MORE.

I have also started a group called "The Game Changers," a collaboration of parents and students willing to first change themselves and then change the game. We have the power that God has given us to change our surroundings.



A ONCE TROUBLESOME KID SPEAKS OUT AGAINST BULLYING

by Adalia Ellis



Isaac Wilson

Isaac Wilson loves Florence. Born and raised here, his ties to the community run deep. He went to North Vista, Williams, Wilson and then Morris College in Sumter. He spent a few years living in other states until recently moving back to Florence this past year.

Wilson describes himself as a troublesome kid when he was younger. He made a change in high school when he became involved with the Young Democrats of South Carolina. He chose to stay close to home in college and to return to the area because he loves Florence

and its people.

“If people, like me, who have experienced that (growing up here) and have become a leader in their own right--if they keep leaving Florence, keep leaving the Pee Dee area--who is going to be here to write the story?”

How did Wilson go from being a troublesome kid to a leader? There were a few factors that played a significant role in him changing things around in high school. The first significant experience was education. He began learning things as he was getting involved in politics. He learned that black communities were being gentrified as a race. It was education and understanding that mobilized him to get up and stand up about it. The second significant element was that adults who saw him saw his potential, held him accountable and reminded him to be aware of the choices he was making.

“It was people like Dr. Allie Brooks when I was at Wilson and my best friend’s family who kept saying, ‘Hey! You got to make a change. If you want to do great things, then you can’t do this.’”

Now Wilson is the regional deputy director of Young Democrats of America, a James Clyburn Fellow, and he ran for city council in 2016.

It was Wilson’s involvement in politics and addressing gentrification in other places that eventually brought him home. People were seeing him doing things in other cities and began asking him why he didn’t come home to do the same work. When he returned, he joined leaders who had risen in his absence. Today social media has played an

important role in the success of the movement. Using social media, they have created awareness, and the election of President Obama in 2008 made people begin to think about where we are going as a nation and as a people.

Wilson saw another need in our area that no one was talking about at the time, and it is bullying--bullying in schools and the workplace. To address this need, in 2009 he founded Listen 365, a nonprofit organization that addresses bullying prevention. He also published “The Bully and Me,” which has sold over 15,000 copies and started the “Pay It Forward” mentoring program. All of this was inspired by the tragic death of a young girl in



Pennsylvania who committed suicide as a result of being constantly bullied. “Bullying is taking the lives of our children,” said Wilson.

Bullying also happens in the workplace. Workplace bullying involves behaviors that intimidate, degrade or humiliate employees. “Surprisingly, nationally, the numbers say that more women do workplace bullying than men,” said Wilson. He pointed out that when workplaces create consequences for such behavior there is a noticeable decrease in bullying.

Bullying transcends race and culture, sexual orientation and age. Solutions are needed, and there has to be diversity in how solutions are created. Everyone is needed at the table--doctors, lawyers, teachers, parents, children and police.

“All of our children are subject to bullying. All of our children are subject to suicide.” People sometimes call Wilson the expert, but he says, “The children and teachers are the experts. They are the best solution.”

For more information or to request the services of Listen 365 please use the following contact information: www.theisaacwilsonproject.org, theisaacwilsonproject@gmail.com, Fb, twitter and instagram

WORKPLACE BULLYING CAN LEAD TO LONG-TERM EMPLOYEE ILLNESSES

Bullying is a threat to employees in many American workplaces.

According to a recent study by the U.S. Workplace Bullying Institute, bullies on the job can cause serious health problems in their victims.

In some cases, bullied employees are temporarily or even permanently disabled because of cruel treatment at work.

WHAT IS WORKPLACE BULLYING?

Workplace bullying is a complex set of behaviors that can have a devastating effect on its targets. These forms of abusive conduct may include all of the following:

- Threats
- Intimidation
- Verbal or physical abuse
- Deliberate humiliation
- Sabotage
- Withholding of necessary resources



A FAMILY MADE COMPLETE

by Kim Williams



The first time Melanie held her daughter Emaleigh

William and Melanie always wanted to have a family. They spoke of how they would love to have children. The Lord blessed them with two biological sons, Will and Cole, but even so, they felt like they were meant to have a third child. They didn't know that adoption was in God's plans for them just yet though...

In 2012, Melanie had the opportunity to go on a short-term mission trip to Kenya. It was an amazing trip where she met children who touched her life in many ways. While on that trip, she realized that there was a child for her own family, waiting for them. Melanie knew she wouldn't birth the child herself. However, that child was already growing in her heart. She was not even sure where the child was or even if they had been born yet. However, she felt in her heart that they were supposed to adopt some day. Once she returned home, William joined Melanie in praying about adoption and tried to discern if what they were feeling was from the Lord. After a year of praying and seeking God, in their hearts, they knew that it was.

Soon, Melanie found herself joining as many groups on Facebook that she could find, of people who had previously walked the path of adoption. It was so helpful to gain insight into this new world that would become their future as well. William and Melanie had dear friends who had adopted their son from Korea. While sharing their experience, they highly recommended the agency that they had used, Holt International. There was much research and prayer before they decided to use the same agency.



The first family photo

When the two decided to share the news with others that they felt the Lord was leading them to adoption, everyone was elated. Of course, family members all assumed that they would adopt a girl since they already had two boys. However, when Melanie and William applied initially with Holt International, they did not specify gender. After a while though, they felt strongly that their waiting child was a girl.

Since adoption is such a lengthy process, there was much that the family had to learn. Melanie shares this for other prospective adoptive parents, "The biggest piece of advice I can give new adoptive parents is to let the Lord lead and simply do what He says. Be patient in the wait, but be proactive on your paperwork in every way that you can."

There was a whirlwind of emotions surrounding their adoption story. Melanie recalled, "We were most excited for our sons to have a sister and our daughter to have the love of a family! We were nervous about all of it! We worried about the financial aspect, travelling to China (all 4 of us flew there), and how our daughter would adapt to us and vice versa." They knew she had never even seen a dog, and they had a loud one waiting at home to meet her. The questions and unknowns swirled around them about so many things.



Emaleigh ready for the daddy and daughter dance.

However, in 2014, it was finally the moment for everyone to meet precious Emaleigh for the first time! At first, she was confused and



Look at Emaleigh now...

afraid, which is totally normal, her mother said. "She cried, but not for long. Our oldest son, Will, was the first to hold her! I was actually the last to hold her, but she and I bonded instantly. She was, and still is, a Mama's girl! She has a special relationship with her daddy, like going to fancy Daddy Daughter dances and date nights to the park and ice cream store! I'm not allowed to go on those! I believe that taking our boys to China with us was a huge part of their bonding experience. They had about 10 days with nobody else around to get to know one another. The three of them have been incredibly close ever since!"

When asked if they would adopt again, they responded that they believe their family is now complete. If it were possible to rewind time, they would "certainly adopt Emaleigh over and over and over again!" In hindsight, they recommend Holt International, if anyone is researching possible adoption agencies. Melanie also mentioned that she is happy to be a sounding board or resource for anyone seeking more information. As you can see in these included photographs, thanks to adoption, this is one more family made complete.

ADOPT
IF YOU CAN'T ADOPT:

FOSTER ↻

IF YOU CAN'T FOSTER:

SPONSOR ↻

IF YOU CAN'T SPONSOR:

VOLUNTEER ↻

IF YOU CAN'T VOLUNTEER:

DONATE ↻

IF YOU CAN'T DONATE:

EDUCATE ↻

JUSTICEWORKS ON DOING WHATEVER IT TAKES

Submitted by Ashley Simpson, Adoptive Mother



CHARLESTON - Many people would agree that it takes a village to raise a child. We believe that this might be even truer for families like ours who adopt older children from the foster care system. It was almost three years ago when our son came into our lives for the very first time. Nothing could have prepared us for the difficulty we would face in dealing with his trauma and behaviors. Within just a few weeks, we knew that were out of our depth in handling his issues and were going to need professional help.

As brand new parents, we had to learn to navigate the waters of the mental health system with our son. Few services are available that cater to his level of need, and even fewer people are willing to work with a child who is willfully defiant. Screaming rages, physical aggression and a destroyed home were quickly becoming the new norm for our little family. However, we knew that this picture was going to be unsustainable for a long period of time.

The referral came through for us to receive additional services through JusticeWorks. Initially, we were a little skeptical about the level of care they could provide. What kind of services could they possibly provide that would help us to handle the struggles our new family was facing? It seemed that there was always a new behavior to address, and we were quite tired from becoming “instant parents” to a traumatized ten-year-old.

Fast forward three years and our family has been immeasurably helped by the services that JusticeWorks was able to provide for our son. Each and every worker that we came into contact with had the same mindset: they were willing to do whatever it takes to help our son achieve success in our home and community. Their motivation to try out-of-the-box solutions in our home was unheard of, especially in comparison to our interactions with other agencies. We had one amazing behavior interventionist who remained consistent, supportive, and warm toward our son – even when he was anything but pleasant to her. She continued to show up day after day despite knowing that it would likely be more of the same behaviors.

Because of her commitment to our family, we started to see slow and steady progress in some of our son’s behaviors. His rages became less frequent and less intense. We learned how to de-escalate situations in a much timelier manner, reducing the amount of damage that was done to our home and our relationships in the process. Our family started the slow process of healing, and we continue on that same path today.

While I would love to share that our son is now fully healed, it would be far from the truth. He has much ground to cover to make up for his disadvantaged start in life. However, we know that we are on the right path to uncovering what works for him. In part, we owe these discoveries to the wisdom, experience, and dedication that JusticeWorks displayed when we felt defeated. If there were more agencies who were willing to do “whatever it takes” to make a child successful, we might have more adoption stories with a happy ending instead of frazzled parents at their wits’ end.

WE HELP TO BUILD BETTER FUTURES

by Kim Williams



Samantha Waters, JusticeWorks licensed professional counselor

JusticeWorks Behavioral Care has been building better futures for youth and their communities in South Carolina for the last seven years. This office branched off of JusticeWorks Care out of Pennsylvania, which was established 19 years ago. With that many years of experience, it is no wonder they have become an invaluable resource to so many. There are five offices conveniently located across our state. They are in Charleston, Columbia, Conway, Florence and Greenville.

Recently, Samantha Waters shared how she came to join the team four years ago. At that time, she began as a behavioral interventionist that would go out into the community to offer many services. Over the years, she progressed through different roles of providing a variety of aid to individuals and families who needed it. The licensed professional counselor currently serves as regional program director for the Florence office (covering counties of Florence, Dillon, Marion, Clarendon, Sumter, Darlington, Lee and Chesterfield) and the Columbia office (covering counties of Richland, Lexington, Kershaw, Aiken, Fairfield, Newberry, York and Lancaster).

JusticeWorks Behavioral Care partners with the Department of Social Services (DSS) for foster care and families within the adoption

system. They collectively strive towards the goal of preserving the home or foster family placements. If at all possible, they desire to keep the family structure together and stable. Through the many services that JusticeWorks provides, through their Rehabilitative Behavioral Health program, they are able to assess behaviors, recommend techniques and tools to manage those behaviors and offer individualized support along the way, including crisis management and therapy for all members of the family.

While the services are primarily Medicaid funded, anyone can call to ask for an assessment. A major benefit to seeking assistance with JusticeWorks Behavioral Care is their focus on the family system and willingness to have flexible schedules, which allows them to be available to the families when they need the help the most.



THE DANFORDS' ADOPTION STORY

by Kim Williams



The Danford Family

The call of adoption came to Kendal and Jennifer Danford about four years into their marriage. As followers of Jesus and believers in the Bible, based on James 1:27, the Danfords understood that pure worship includes caring for orphans, which can look very different for each family. "It wasn't until after having to deal with infertility, a miscarriage, the birth of our oldest daughter, and five more years of infertility that we knew it was time to start the

process to adopt a child," shared Jennifer Danford.

Once they knew the time was right, she and husband, Kendal had conversations with others who had already adopted. They chose to use an agency that came highly recommended by those families. Jennifer shared that she was most excited that it was finally time to do what God had given them the call to do. As they would continue learning in the process of adoption, "wait" is very difficult to hear. To actually get the "go" was a thrill. "The first seven months were the easiest because I was busy gathering all the necessary documents that would eventually be sent to China. Honestly, it felt good to feel like I was in the driver's seat and in a way, I was." However, "once the paperwork was mailed to China, it was as if I was moved to the back seat of the longest bus you've ever seen and told to sit until further notice."

When the Danfords' first started the lengthy adoption process, everyone was supportive with the exception of just a few. As they expected, people questioned why they were choosing to adopt internationally instead of domestically. Each time, they found themselves willing to explain that they were sure God had directed their family to adopt from China, and that was enough for them. A few people asked what their family would do if their child decided to look for her parents when she became older. Still a couple more unknowingly revealed their racist hearts and cut them off. That hurt, but with time, in their hearts, they knew that those people would be the ones missing out on what their future child could teach them.

Naively, the Danfords were both ready to "rescue" a child from a system, or from pain, from another country. Patiently, God showed and continues to show them that their child wasn't in need of being "rescued." If anyone needed that, it was Kendal and Jennifer.

When asked about the Danfords' fears they faced while on their adoption journey, this is what Jennifer had to share:

In considering what we were most nervous about, it is necessary to explain that there are several stages in the entire adoption process. With each stage comes a new set of questions, fears, and concerns. As we started this journey, the first "fear" was one that revolved around

finances. It was laughable, honestly, to even think that our income could handle the cost of adoption. Laughable! But, over and over again, we watched God provide for us and meet the financial needs. I was keeping a journal of our journey and tried tracking the monetary gifts that we were blessed

with. Without exaggeration, it became impossible for me to even record it all. He was providing so fast and always at the right times, I could not even write it all down.

A year and a half into the adoption process, we discovered that I was pregnant! With this miraculous news came new questions. We knew that China was where we would adopt from and our paperwork had been entered into their computer database just over a year prior to our finding out that we were having a baby biologically. China has their own rules about families who are adopting and giving birth during the same window of time. We were faced with the very real possibility of having to start the entire adoption process over if our biological baby was not at least 12 months old when we were matched with our Chinese baby. It was crazy! It was stressful! But we knew without a doubt that God called us to adopt, so we forged on. We also knew that God had given us a miracle baby in my womb so with initial shock that was followed by overflowing joy, we walked forward. These doubts and fears were laid to rest once our middle daughter turned one, and it was confirmed that a match with a healthy baby was still years away. It had already been 2 years and 6 months since we started.

With each month that we waited, came emails from our agency



The Danford children

saying that the process was slowing down in China. China was saying that there were more adoptive families than there were orphaned children and we knew that wasn't true. We began to wonder if we would ever see this child that had been growing in our hearts for years. Between the one-child policy and poverty, we asked ourselves questions like "Has our daughter's biological mom found out that she is having a baby yet? Has our sweet girl been abandoned? Who is going

to find her? What are the circumstances around her birth? Her abandonment? Did her birth mom die during labor and delivery?" While on one side of the world a story of hope, love, and redemption was being written, a story of deep pain, emptiness and loss was taking place on the other side. One didn't happen without the other and knowing that caused us to ache and long at the same time.

Fearing we would be at least 50 before we were matched, we willingly told God that we would take it into our own hands. We proceeded to start paperwork 3 different times to be considered for a child that had special needs. And 3 times, we could not get through to the last question. We realized, every time, that we were wrongly trying to work it out in our own strength and our own time, which we thought was a lot better and faster than God's. Remember me saying that WE were the ones needing to be rescued? From ourselves, at that!

A third set of fears came when we, after God directed us, in his time, to start and complete paperwork for a child with special needs, had a placement. We had a picture of our baby girl. We had some information. Four years and one month after beginning, she had a face and a name! We had a baby...just not in our home yet. Questions like, "Is there more going on in her body than what we have been told? Is there room in our tiny house for three children? Do we need to move to another house? Is this the right house? Did we do the right thing by moving into a bigger house one month before going to China?" were the ones on our minds. By this point, we had learned that all we needed to do was let Jesus lead and we could trust him EVERY step of the way.





THE DANFORDS' CONT'D



The Danford Children

As already mentioned, I wrestled with questions that surrounded what would eventually lead to our child even being in a position to become a Danford. For four and a half years, we would entertain the repeated questions of “How much longer?” and “Aren’t you ready to go get your daughter?” all the while knowing what that would mean for her. The deepest, unanswerable loss she would probably experience in her life

and we would be on the other side of that. With that in mind so much of the time, it gave me a different perspective on “the wait” and a willingness to be present with my husband and children already in our home. But it was still hard!

Thinking back to the time surrounding when they would meet and actually bring their daughter home from China, Jennifer recalled her and her husband watching a documentary about adoption, which showed families meeting their children for the first time. Realistically, the Danfords knew it would be hard, but they hoped and prayed that it wouldn’t be traumatic for their daughter. When Kendal, Jennifer, and Jordan (their oldest daughter), first met her in China, the situation was a bit different from what they all had hoped for. The lady holding her never offered her to any of the Danfords, which had not been expected. “We were talking to her and trying to give her time to get used to our faces and voices. However, after about 20 minutes, our interpreter (who had done this for years), came to me and said, ‘You are going to have to take her from the lady. It doesn’t appear that she is going to hand her to you.’”

Jennifer recalls, “In my head I was screaming, “No!!!! We are already taking her from everything she has ever known and now you are telling me I have to physically remove her from this woman’s arms??” I wanted it to be easier. I didn’t want to be a part of my child’s trauma. Later, I would come to terms that our adopting her was traumatic. I reached out, took our daughter into my arms, all while being videotaped by Kendal, hoping for a magic exchange of love. All the thoughts of magic ended when our child started screaming and hit me in the nose! I gasped with surprise, and then we all started laughing. I think everyone in that hotel lobby had been holding their breath, and although it wasn’t the exchange I was hoping for, our precious baby girl was in my arms. The days that followed were full of clinching hugs, pushing away, lots of tears (from all 4 of us), and this new exchange of give and take, looking for the right combination, the right balance. It was family!”

It was what they had hoped and prayed for since the beginning of their marriage, and what God had planned.

If you happen to be part of a family who is looking to adopt, or know of someone interested in adoption, the Danfords have some

advice. First, they highly recommend for the family to read books on the subject and try to prepare as best as they can before bringing their child home. Books they recommend are “The Connected Child” and “The Whole Brain Child.” Speaking to other adoptive families who have had their children home for varying amounts of time can be helpful as well.

Second, it is incredibly important for adoptive parents to have a plan and follow through with it when they get home with the child. It is necessary to draw boundaries around their family in order for the adoptee to have their needs met only by Mom and Dad in order to foster the attachment to them. What these families can do is keep all visitors (including family) at bay for the first few weeks. During that time, families/friends around them may wish to help, and could provide a meal for the family. If a cooler is left by a door, it could be dropped off while still honoring the plan the parents have set up. Still others may like to take the biological children for a play date, allowing the parents to have one-on-one time with the new child to aid in developing their bond.

Third, once the family has had some time to adjust to their new family dynamics, another resource that should not be overlooked is to connect with other adoptive families that are geographically close to them. It is beneficial to both the parents and children (biological and adoptive) to develop relationships with others who are facing the same challenges and joys that adoption brings. Adoptive couples have to be intentional about making time for one another. Date nights need to be a priority so finding sitters who are qualified to give the care you desire is necessary. They also recommend trying to attend an Empowered To Connect conference (or simulcast) every year. What you learn from this conference is amazing, and every year is a little bit different.

FAMILY PLANNING

OUR FAMILY WAS NO ACCIDENT – WE PLANNED FOR IT. WE THOUGHT ABOUT THE CHILDREN WHO WERE GROWING UP ALONE. WE KNEW THAT TOGETHER WE COULD BE AN EXTRAORDINARY FAMILY. WHEN YOU PLAN TO HAVE CHILDREN, CONSIDER ADOPTING AN OLDER CHILD.

888.732.4453 adoption.org familybuilders

November is

National Adoption month

HELPING OUR AGENCIES CARE FOR FLORENCE COUNTY

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



Mercy Medicine FREE Clinic Executive Director, Linda Spires, talks with former patient turned employee, Jazmin Singletary.

Mercy Medicine FREE Clinic

For individuals that are uninsured, under-insured, working poor, or homeless, Mercy Medicine FREE Clinic (MMFC) is there to provide medical and dental services at no cost. Besides just providing care through health services, the staff at MMFC also goes above and beyond to provide extra care to the patients they see. In the UWFC's campaign video (available to view online at www.uwflorence.org/CampaignCentral/Video), we highlighted one of MMFC's former patients, Jazmin Singletary. Singletary originally came to MMFC for a toothache, but while she was there, she also received encouragement from one of the volunteers to go back to school and get her degree. With the volunteer's encouragement, Singletary went back to school and eventually came back to MMFC for her preceptorship, then as a volunteer, and finally as an employee. When asked what it was that led her back to MMFC, Singletary said that not only did MMFC do so much to care for her, but working there is also like working with family.

Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault

The Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault provides a wide range of services that help those who have been a victim of domestic and sexual assault. One of the services that they provide through the help of UWFC funding is their Emergency Shelter. Shonette Dargan, the Emergency Shelter's program director, describes the shelter as not only a safe haven that is free of violence for women who have been victims of abuse and their children, but the Pee Dee



Volunteers with the UWFC's Day of Caring clean up the Pee Dee Coalition Emergency Shelter's playground.

Coalition also tries to make the shelter feel like a home away from home for its residents. Trained counselors and shelter staff will act as caregivers for the residents and provide them with counseling sessions, assistance with paperwork, accompaniment to any hearings and/or interviews, and anything else they might need to help them eventually

leave the shelter and start a new life free of violence.

Senior Citizens Association in Florence County

For many of the homebound senior citizens in Florence County, they receive vital care from the staff and volunteers from the Senior Citizens Association (SCA) in Florence County. Through the agency's Meals on Wheels program, nutritious meals are delivered to senior citizens who are unable to prepare meals for themselves and/or are unable to leave their homes to buy food supplies. Last year, the SCA delivered close to 55,050 meals to over 200 senior citizens in Florence County, thanks in part to the funding they receive from UWFC.

Even though the agency's main focus is providing meals to ensure these senior citizens do not go hungry, the staff and volunteers also

take care of them through other ways, such as doing any housework that may need to be done or transporting them to doctor's appointments. For some of the seniors, the person who delivers their meals may be the only person who speaks with them and regularly checks on their well-being.

Although we have only highlighted three of our 17 partner agencies, we believe that all 17 agencies act as caregivers for those in need in some way, whether that is an American Red Cross volunteer comforting a family that has just lost their home to a fire, a child getting assistance with his or her homework while at the Florence Family YMCA's after-school program, or the homeless receiving food and a safe place to sleep at night from The Salvation Army.



The Pee Dee Coalition Emergency Shelter tries to create a home away from home for their residents.

However, if we want to continue to have this care available to the residents of Florence County, we need your help. The UWFC officially kicked off our 2018-2019 "Play a Starring Role in Your Community" campaign in September to help raise donations for these agencies and their services. The agencies that benefit from your donation

include the American Red Cross, Eastern South Carolina Chapter; Boys & Girls Clubs of the Pee Dee Area; CARE House of the Pee Dee; The Chrysalis Center of Circle Park; Civil Air Patrol; Florence Area Literacy Council; Florence County Disabilities & Special Needs Board; Florence Family YMCA; Girl Scouts of Eastern South Carolina; Lighthouse Ministries; Mercy Medicine FREE Clinic; Pee Dee Area Council, Boy Scouts of America; Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault; Pee Dee Speech & Hearing Center; The Salvation Army; Senior Citizens Association in Florence County; and Youth Mentors of the Pee Dee.

To donate to the UWFC's campaign, you can either go online to www.uwflorence.org or stop by our office at 1621 West Palmetto Street in Florence. Every donation, no matter the size, is appreciated.



MEET THE WOMAN DIRECTING ACTIVE DAY'S VISION

by Ta' Meeka Epps



Tyra Jefferson

Caregiving is often a 24-hour, seven days a week, job. It creeps up on you. You rarely plan to be caregivers. However, you do what you know must be done. You start off dropping by your mom's house and doing her laundry, or taking your dad to an appointment. You find yourself doing the grocery shopping and refilling prescriptions. Gradually, you are doing more and more. At some point, you realize you have made a commitment to take care of someone else, and you must see it through.

Most caregivers work a full-time job outside of being a caregiver, especially if they are caring for a loved one. The caregiver may be raising children, volunteering, may be a spouse, or may have other family commitments. Adding the responsibility of being a caregiver can easily lead to frustration and exhaustion. You might need to learn how to navigate social service systems, call doctors while you're at work, advocate for the patient, and take care of his or her day-to-day needs while you try to do all of those same things for yourself and your family.

As a caregiver, it is easy to become overwhelmed and forget to give self the same care you so easily give to your patients/loved ones. Taking a respite break from caregiving will give you a chance to connect with others, share, laugh, catch up, renew. Active Day of the Pee Dee Adult Day Health Center is a respite provider and a community resource to families caring and living with a loved one with ASD (autism), Alzheimer's, dementia, special needs and/or a chronic condition. Active Day advocates for awareness to young adults with special needs transitioning from high school to adulthood.

Tyra Jefferson is director for Active Day of the Pee Dee Adult Day Health Center. As director, her role includes the direction of operations of the facility, and she ensures departmental compliance with company policies and procedures, safety and regulatory laws and standards. She is also responsible for the overall financial performance



of the facility. She acts as compliance officer for HIPAA regulations; performs quality management functions; coordinates flow of facility services including administrative, payroll, billing and programming functions; oversees marketing and community development activities; and participates in meetings, seminars, public

forums as needed on behalf of the organization. Jefferson has been employed with Active Day since November 2017.

The vision of Active Day is to enhance the health and happiness of the individuals served and those who care for them. Active Day is committed to increasing awareness of adult day programs and services through educational opportunities at the center level, creating innovative programs and services for the families served, community engagements through support groups and creating curriculums which provide creative



educational opportunities.

Jefferson serves because she is a mother to a set of twins (boy and girl), and her son is autistic. Jefferson understands the strong need to advocate for families, personally and professionally. She understands the strong need to be aware of their community and resources

available to them. Jefferson serves because she has a passion and dedication for helping others maximize their own success, and helping is the only way she knows how to fulfill what she committed to do as a social worker. "I made a commitment to help others, and I plan to do that each and every day I am given the opportunity!"

Active Day is the leading premier provider of adult day services in over 14 states and 96 centers, with 13 centers in the state of South Carolina--Pee Dee being one of them. Their values are to create a warm and welcoming community; bring passion and smiles; always listen as they believe in person-centered planning; lead by example in all they do; and never compromise integrity or the safety of the families, members or staff while being innovative, creative and FUN. Active Day accepts Medicaid, Veteran Benefits, private pay and grants. They are open on alternating Saturdays. They accept referrals and appreciate walk-ins for tours. They are open Monday-Friday 7:30a.m.-4p.m. and are located at 2120 Enterprise Drive, Florence, S.C., 29501. Active Day of the Pee Dee offers FREE TRIAL DAYS. Follow them on Facebook at Active Day of the Pee Dee. They can be reached at 843-665-1919, or visit them on the web www.activeday.com.

Caring for
CAREGIVERS



CAREGIVERS ARMED WITH FAITH, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS

by Ta'Meeka Epps



The Pierce Family

National Family Caregivers Month is celebrated every November. During this time, the contributions of those volunteers, friends and family members who support a loved one with managing a debilitating disability or failing health are celebrated while bringing awareness to this selfless work. Caregivers are rarely trained to do the broad range of tasks asked of them in their role. As a result, they could end up with back strain because they haven't

had the benefit of training from a physical therapist on how to correctly transfer someone from wheelchair to bed or from chair to car. Or they could take their baby girl in for a routine checkup for minor hip pain only to be given a diagnosis of B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia and in that moment become a caregiver.

The title "parent" comes with an invisible cape and makes you innately a caregiver. Lisa and David are the parents/caregiver of the Pierce family in which they are raising two young queens: Alexis (16) and big sister to nine-year-old Emmalee--a fierce fighter. June 20, 2017, the youngest member of the Pierce family, would face the biggest battle of her young life where the mission was to BEAT cancer.



Emmalee participates in Relay for Life

"We had no signs, other than some hip pain, and were utterly shocked to get that news. That was one of the worst days of our lives." The Pierce Family was unaware of the impending battle, however, not unarmed and was committed to "Caregiving Around the Clock." The little warrior

of the family was up for the battle as well.

Caregivers do not have the luxury of clocking out. When one job ends for the day, the job of caregiver continues 24 hours of the day and seven days of the week.

The theme for this year's annual observance is "Caregiving Around the Clock." Providing that level of care has the ability to crowd out other important areas of life, especially for a family where the parents are employed and the children are school aged, such as the Pierce family. The matriarch of the family, Lisa, is employed full time in a hospital, so the patriarch, David, who has retired from the military, became full-time caregiver.

"We were perfectly set up by God to be able to provide exactly what our daughter needed because of the events of our life together. David was phenomenal in making it less stressful for me, taking her to most of her appointments so I did not have parental guilt for having



Emmalee enjoying a meal

to work."

The Pierce family, armed with their faith, an amazing team of physicians and nurses at Palmetto Richland Children's Hospital, as well as their family and friends, has created the balance that nurtures the little warrior while supporting the team of caregivers.

A caregiver must have the ability to provide physical and emotional support for the patient while understanding they, too, need the physical and emotional support of the people

willing to aid in the process. It takes a team effort to BEAT Leukemia. The caregivers are tasked with anticipating the needs of the patient, helping to keep them comfortable while being as innovative as possible to maintain a level of normalcy in the patient's life.

The Pierce family and their little warrior have fought through some very rough times while navigating unfamiliar waters and settling into new roles as caregivers for their amazing fighter. The past year has revealed to the Pierce family how faith looks, and they are courageously battling towards the final treatment date of October 10, 2019. The Pierce family calls Florence home and wants readers to be encouraged in whatever the battle may be because you are perfectly equipped to handle any struggle. Be faithful, and continually advocate for your loved one.

Here's to all
volunteers, those
dedicated people
who give selflessly
of their time, talent
and treasures.

THANK YOU
FOR MAKING THE WORLD
A BETTER PLACE



HEART FOR THE HOMELESS OF FLORENCE

Articles by Les Echols



Councilwoman Pat Gibson-Hye Moore

Florence City Councilwoman Pat Gibson-Hye Moore has a long history of community service and sacrifice. Her experience and work with the homeless is a story of triumph and empathy for those less fortunate. "Homelessness, hunger and the loss of hope is real," said Hye Moore.

"I have a passion for the homeless because I understand their plight," she continued. "My father died during my junior year of college, and my mother died in my senior year. I had a part-time job at the time but lost it shortly after my mother's death, and without my job, it wasn't long before I lost my apartment. I remember being scared and homeless. The first night, I rode the subway all night long trying to figure out what to do. I didn't want to leave New York because it would mean leaving school. The next day I walked the streets, hungry and scared. Finally, I decided to ask a friend if I could sleep on their sofa. I was no longer out on the streets, and I was still in school, but I was scared. Fortunately, by the Grace of God, I kept it together and graduated," Hye Moore said, emotionally.

When she moved to South Carolina 27 years ago after her grandmother was murdered in a home invasion, she never intended to make Florence her home. "My intent was to remain in Florence for one year to handle unsettled business with her estate, but my main goal was to make sure justice was served in my grandmother's death," Hye Moore explained.

Today, she is thankful for God having a different plan for her life. "I began noticing so many things that was an endangerment to the community at-large where I resided. It was during that time that I began gathering neighbors and founded the East Florence Community Organization. We are still in existence today, and together, we worked to help rid the neighborhood and Levy Park of individuals openly selling drugs and committing crimes," she continued.

A few years later, Hye Moore was appointed to the Florence Housing Authority where she served for nine years. In 2005, she ran and won the election for the Florence School District #1 school board, Seat 2.

Then in 2016 she was elected to Florence City Council to fulfill the two years left on the term of the late Edward Robinson after his sudden death. In June of this year, she was re-elected to a four-year term on Florence City Council, District #2. On Valentine's Day of this year, Hye Moore wanted to show love to the homeless and acknowledge them as being a vital member of the community. Therefore, she founded the Hearts for the Homeless event at the Levy Park Community Center in Florence.

"The event was heartfelt," she said, "as attendees lit candles and sent balloons up for those that died under various circumstances while trying to survive homelessness in the streets--like the man who was burned to death in an abandoned house, or the one hit by a train. To make them feel special, the event nicely decorated and served a deliciously catered meal including dessert with enough food left for those who wanted a carryout for later. Individuals from several shelters came to the event, as well as walk-ins from the street. We even had music," Hye Moore said.

"I feel that the homeless population is a vital part of our community. Everyone has a purpose, whether we understand it or not. I see homeless individuals walking around every day. Some women are homeless with their children having to find a safe place to sleep every night while panhandling for food during the day. Some individuals are homeless because of unavoidable mishaps: job loss, mental illness, death of a parent or spouse, an accident that left them disabled or drugs. As leaders, we must lead by example and show love, compassion and hope for everyone," concluded Hye Moore.

Pat Gibson-Hye Moore has been married to her loving husband, Kermit Moore for eight years. She attended the public schools of New York City and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, which is also in New York City. She has a B.S. in criminal justice and psychology.

GET INVOLVED TO HARVEST HOPE IN THE COMMUNITY



Mary Louise Resch

COLUMBIA - Raised in a small town in eastern Nebraska, Mary Louise Resch currently serves as the Government Relations, Grants, and Disaster manager for Harvest Hope Food Bank and has been with the organization for seven years. Harvest Hope feeds the hungry across 20 counties of South Carolina. A large part of Resch's role with Harvest Hope is building collaborative relationships with other non-profit organizations; the business and faith communities; and elected and appointed

officials. She is responsible for raising \$1.5-1.7 million annually for the food bank, supporting child, senior, military, law enforcement and other programs there.

After serving nine years in the military, Resch began working in a variety of human services agencies, addressing various needs, including juvenile justice, child abuse and neglect, drug and alcohol abuse, and hunger. During those years, she became a highly respected grant writer, bringing in millions of dollars to the state of South Carolina. After a brief personal sabbatical, Resch joined Harvest Hope as its grant writer. Since then, her role has evolved to encompass the fields of government relations and disaster management, overseeing relief efforts for four major disasters, including 2018's Hurricane Florence and subsequent downstream flooding in the Pee Dee.

When asked how Harvest Hope serves the need of the hungry, Resch was very specific. "Harvest Hope takes a multi-track approach to food insecurity in the 20 South Carolina counties that it serves.

Using data sources such as unemployment rates, food insecurity information, poverty levels, etc., Harvest Hope makes data-driven decisions on what types of programs are needed in any given community. Working with approximately 500 existing organizations like local soup kitchens, community food pantries, shelters, senior, child, military and other feeding programs, Harvest Hope leverages its resources to ensure the highest levels of transparency and accountability, with 98 cents of every dollar donated going back into direct services, leaving only 2 cents for operations and overhead," Resch concluded.

Resch gave four key components of how the business community and community at large can help Harvest Hope in their mission. "There are several ways the community can become involved. The most prevalent are by taking a tour, donating, volunteering and hosting or participating in food drives. Most people who visit one of Harvest Hope's warehouses are amazed at the size of our operations and better understand how we can feed over 2 million individuals each year. Donation dollars help keep our fleet of trucks on the road, and further expand where assistance is needed," concluded Resch.

Mary Louise Resch lives in West Columbia with her Siamese cat, Ming. She enjoys reading, traveling, and is an accomplished needle artist, creating hand embroidered pieces that she gives as gifts to friends and family. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Services (Psychology) and Master of Science degree in Education, focusing on community/agency counseling and community development. Resch has received many recognitions and awards during her career, including selection as the 2017-2018 Midlands Jefferson Award winner for her work with the military community.

HOUSE OF HOPE DIRECTOR'S REDEMPTION STORY

Articles by Les Echols



Bryan Braddock

Bryan Braddock is the executive director of the House of Hope in Florence, which has two Christ-based long-term shelters that serve the homeless men, women and children of the Pee Dee area. Braddock has been serving the homeless population in the Florence community for five years. Prior to working with the homeless, he worked in a local addictions ministry.

When asked about the journey that brought him to House of Hope, Braddock humbly started by saying, "Let's just say the Lord works in mysterious ways. Twelve years ago,

I made my one phone call from jail to Dean Lisenby, my Sunday School teacher. I told Dean I had been arrested for possession of drugs and asked him to go to my house and let my wife know that I had been arrested."

This arrest became a pivotal point in Braddock's life and career because over the next few years, he successfully battled drug addiction and was working at a drug program in Illinois. "A couple of years later, I was offered an opportunity in Rockford when the aforementioned Dean Lisenby called me to apply for the position at the House of Hope. Dean was on the board of the House of Hope and suggested me for the position. Dean has been the board chair, and I have been working with him for the last five years," stated Braddock, enthusiastically.

The House of Hope addresses homelessness on different levels. First, they meet the emergency food, shelter and clothing needs of homeless men, women and children at the Courtney McGinnis Shelter on Church Street. In addition to providing these basic needs in a safe place, they also provide case management to their guests. "Through case management, we can address the root causes of homelessness and connect their guests with agency partners that can offer a long-term solution to the issues that caused the homeless situation," explained Braddock. "We also offer long-term transitional shelter and a Life

Recovery Program to men at our men's facility. The Life Recovery Program assists men with Christian discipleship, job training, money management and counseling, among other things. The Life Recovery program lasts nine to 12 months, with the men graduating at its completion. Success for the House of Hope is when the men, women and children that we serve gain permanent housing," he continued.

Braddock also explained how the local and business community and community at large can help the House of Hope minister to the



House of Hope Community Shelter

local homeless population. "We need volunteers to help serve meals, do special projects or assist us at our local Mission Mart retail locations, which also provide employment training as well as job opportunities for House of Hope residents. In kind gifts of food, bottled water, cleaning supplies, towels, socks, diapers etc. are always a huge blessing. Business

sponsorship for our annual 5K run and Evening of Hope events are also appreciated. Our belief is that, as a community, if we could all just love people where they are in life, assist them in whatever way we are able and treat them with kindness, we could give the hope that someone might need to believe in a better tomorrow. I am truly blessed to have the opportunity to work with local government officials, local church leaders, local businesses, the local community and other local nonprofit organizations to collectively make a life changing impact in the lives of the men, women and children we serve at the House of Hope," Braddock concluded.

Bryan Braddock has been married to his wife Tracey for 22 years. They have five daughters: Hannah, Haley, Hayden, Holly and Hope. Braddock graduated from Francis Marion University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics.

PDCAP'S PROGRAM MANAGER INSPIRES THE COMMUNITY



Sonyetta Cooper

Sonyetta Cooper is the program manager of the Pee Dee Community Action Partnership Emergency Shelter and an empowerment counselor for the Columbia Urban League's Level Up program. The purpose of Level Up is to provide a constant and stable environment for youth in foster care. The program offers a nurturing curriculum that includes an employment and career-shadowing component, a youth-focused workshop series, year-round mentoring and involvement in other Urban League youth initiatives. Cooper has been

in the non-profit world for over 20 years. She began her journey in 1998 as an employee of Hope for the Pee Dee (now known as HopeHealth).

Cooper was the office manager at HopeHealth before being promoted to community outreach coordinator. Her job consisted of educating the community about the impact of HIV/AIDS and prevention of the virus. "I worked with them for 7 years and then started my own non-profit after seeing the numbers rising in African American women pertaining to HIV/AIDS and teen pregnancy," she explained. "I tried working in the corporate world then--two years ago. I was hired as the director of a shelter for homeless, displaced and runaway youth called Loving Arms. The shelter closed, and I was working from home and

volunteering in the community when one of the staff members of The Pee Dee Community Action Partnership (PDCAP) informed me that the shelter had recently closed, and they needed someone to help keep the shelter open. Because of some past experiences, my first response was 'no.' Eventually, I realized it was an opportunity to help the community," Cooper continued.

The Pee Dee Community Action Partnership Emergency Shelter gives referrals to individuals for food, clothing and resources. The shelter is also a part of the No One Unsheltered (NOU) Committee. No One Unsheltered is a city-wide initiative focused on finding solutions to homelessness. The shelter's program gives the residents 90 days to complete a series of tasks that will help them to become self-sufficient and obtain permanent housing. After an individual completes the program, PDCAP can assist them with moving into their own home and paying first month's rent, deposit and purchase furniture for them.

"Presently, the shelter runs off donations from community partners and time and work from volunteers. We need more



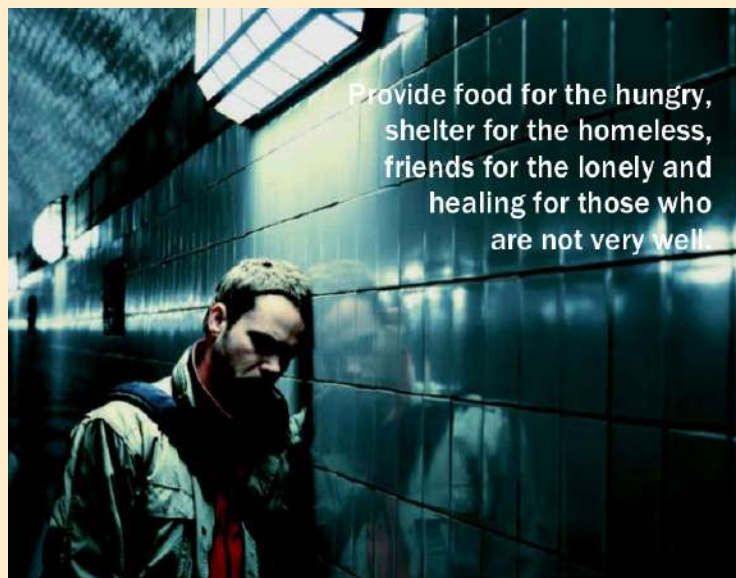
Sonyetta Cooper gave school supplies and book bags to the children at the shelter that were donated from community partners.

PDCAP'S PROGRAM MANAGER CONT'D

funding to be able to implement more services and have a larger impact on homelessness. We ask our partners to promote and support the agency any way possible. We collaborate with the other shelters like House of Hope and Courtney McGinnis-Graham when they have a surplus of food and supplies. They will give us a call and are always willing to share with our shelter,” explained Cooper.

Aside from her tireless work with PDCAP, Sonyetta Cooper is a youth minister at Kingdom Impact Next Generation in Lynchburg and a certified life coach. She also works and serves on the boards of several community organizations, including the National Council of Negro Women (Chaplin), Black Girl Magic of the Pee Dee (Vice President), Love Beyond Bars, NAACP and the Florence Center Commission. She collaborates with various agencies to promote awareness of health disparities in the African American community. She also has a non-profit organization called Girlz of the Pee Dee, which inspires girls and young women to be strong, bold and innovative.

Sonyetta is a 1987 graduate of West Florence High School. She attended Limestone College for business administration.



Equality Awareness

RALDEX VP ON SHOWING SUPPORT FOR ALL PEOPLE

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Chad Patterson

The history of a people, movement, thing or idea relates to how the past events are organized and presented to tell the story while shaping its continual presence in the greater scheme of things. We often celebrate the history and/or accomplishments during a predetermined timespan in hopes of bringing awareness and showing appreciation for their contributions. October has been set aside as LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) History Month.

According to the Business Case for Diversity (research paper), today's workforce is increasingly diverse in terms of personal characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, religion, gender identity and sexual orientation. In turn, it found that a well-managed diverse workforce will both reduce costs and generate greater profit. Clearly, presenting business owners with an incentive to take action and incorporate LGBT supportive workplace policies.

Raldex Hospitality, headquartered in Florence, has been committed to excellence in hospitality development, management and leadership since 1993. Raldex is committed to creating aggressive growth where it sees satisfied guests return and the hotel team members rewarded for their effort. As vice president of Raldex, Chad Patterson has a duty to support the general managers, corporate sales managers and the team members of all of their properties. His job is to ensure efficient operations and optimum sales efforts, but ultimately his bottom line is the people--the people who run the day-to-day operations of the hotels and the people they serve.

“I make sure each of the general managers and team members have the tools they need to do their jobs effectively. The world is one big melting pot of culture. In the hotel business, we are blessed to work with different people from all aspects of life and to serve people

just as diverse. When you have a culture of inclusion at your workplace, it radiates through the personality of each individual within your organization. As a result, the guests which come into your business will feel that positive energy, and they, in turn, feel just as comfortable.”

The hospitality industry is an industry of service. Raldex hotels offer the first line of service to consumers who represent all of the personal characteristics previously mentioned. When consumers and employees of a brand are confident the business's core values and mission are aligned to include the rights and needs of all individuals, the business gains a lifelong supporter of the brand.



Chad Patterson

The biggest challenge for any LGBT individual is being comfortable in their own skin, in both their personal and professional lives. As the vice president of Raldex and a LGBT individual, Chad recognizes, “To many individuals, their job is the means in which they support their family. They cannot afford to lose the income. As a result, they suppress their true self and just ‘do their job’ while not bringing attention to their life outside of work, which includes their sexual orientation. The outcome of this is neither beneficial for the individual or the company. With a culture of inclusion,

these individuals become happier and more comfortable. This usually results in increased productivity and dedication, but most importantly, positive company morale.”

Raldex embraces each of its team members, just as they value each guest that they serve. They understand it is important to recognize and celebrate the diversity and benefits that each of their team members brings to the table. With an array of guests coming through the doors, Raldex Hospitality feels confident in knowing they will have someone to relate to these guests on any given day, and they are grateful for the guests they are privileged to serve.

Chad and his partner Nathaniel have been together for 10 years. Their two sons are ages 14 and 18, and they love to travel, especially taking cruises. They call the Pee Dee area and Florence home.



SIMS SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF MINORITIES WITHIN A MINORITY

by Ta' Meeka Epps



Steven C. Sims

The contributions of members of the LGBTQ community are celebrated during the month of October, bringing about increased visibility and awareness of issues affecting them. LGBTQ History month was created by an educator, and it is only fitting to spotlight a member of this discipline.

Steven C. Sims is the access services librarian/assistant professor in the James A. Rogers Library at Francis Marion University (FMU). He supervises three full-time staff

members and 10 student assistants. The Access Services Department is responsible for opening and closing the library during its weekly 8 1/2 hours each semester. The Access Services Department consists of circulation procedures, reserves, inter-library loans, pascal delivers and other resources that assist patrons in retrieving/accessing information.

FMU is a public liberal arts university located just outside of Florence, and it has a student population of approximately 4,000 students of varying ages, cultural backgrounds, gender identities and ethnicities. This requires that the administration, faculty and staff should be just as diverse in order to advance the mission and initiatives of the institution. If an institution is truly striving for excellence, it understands the need for diversity and inclusion and it, therefore, not only creates a welcoming climate for LGBTQ students, faculty and staff, but it also shapes a healthier environment that facilitates robust dialog.

Sims believes that cultural inclusivity is in place at most institutions of higher education and is increasing in other sectors of employment. "Employees on all levels are now less tolerant of attitudes of superiority and are not reluctant about expressing their opinions. Nevertheless, to ensure that all employees are aware of their practice of inclusivity, employers should incorporate it into their vision or mission statement. As well as a part of their marketing strategies, they should also stress the importance of a culture of inclusion in its organizational structure and success."

Institutions of higher education are tasked with equipping this generation of millennials with a broader spectrum of knowledge and



understanding because of technology and societal transformations. Their mindsets are different from those of previous generations. Thus,



they are not bound by cultural ideologies, and consequently, they do not adhere to what has been typically referred to as 'the norm.' "This cultural shift or 'thinking outside of the box' mentality is producing forward-thinking individuals, who, in turn, have diminished some of the stigmas that have often been associated with the LGBTQ community and other groups," stated Sims.

This shift signifies the need for individual differences to not only be allowed, but also be accepted because there are specific gifts and abilities that

each individual possesses that contribute to their uniqueness and the communities to which they belong. "As a minority group, attempts are often made to humiliate or shun us, simply because we are perceived as a threat to how people are 'supposed to be or act.' The workplace, like home, should not be a battlefield of bigotry and intolerance but rather a more communal space for sharing ideas and expressing differences in attempts to reach common goals."

FMU has been recognized as one of the Best Ethnically Diverse Universities in the South for 2018 by U.S. News & World Report. However, it has always been a leader in South Carolina and the southeast in campus diversity. Diversity is a significant part of the FMU culture. As a center of learning, it advocates for the dissemination of knowledge representing a variety of points of view.

"I have been employed at Francis Marion University for 27 amazing years, and for the past six years, we have been ranked as one of the Great Colleges to Work. This is attributable to how all employees are treated and the fact that opportunities exist for professional advancement and fairness within the institution."

Sims is a member of many professional organizations as well as a founding member of the FMU African-American Faculty and Staff Coalition. He does civic work by serving on the board of the Performing Arts Academy of Marion and serves as choir director at Everbee Missionary Baptist Church, Mullins.

"Long before I knew why, I loved the African proverb, 'Until lions have storytellers, tales of the hunt shall always glorify the hunter.' As a minority within a minority, I gladly speak both for and with the LGBTQ community because one day, we will need someone to tell our stories, lest they are re-written."



DEMONSTRATING RESPECT FOR ALL INDIVIDUALS THE HSC WAY

by Ta'Meeka Epps



Honda of South Carolina's LGBTQ BRG Group

TIMMONSVILLE - Every October is set to remind both the LGBT and wider communities of important roles LGBT people have taken in creating the social, legal and political worlds we live in today. The month of October includes a number of historically important days for the LGBT community, National Coming Out Day (11), anniversary of the first LGBT March on Washington (14) and Spirit Day (20).

Through diversity and inclusion initiatives, Corporate America is able to demonstrate a commitment to the LGBT community, which includes ensuring a safe and accepting workplace with equality for all associates.

Honda of South Carolina (HSC) in Timmons ville knows the importance of recruiting individuals from diverse backgrounds as well as providing them with resources that support and nurture personal as well as professional development.

Part of Honda's Philosophy is Respect for the Individual, and one way it demonstrates this core value is through inclusion & diversity initiatives such as its Business Resource Groups (BRGs). The BRGs were created to connect like-minded individuals with a focus on strengthening the company, workforce, community and individual. BRGs enhance Honda's competitive positioning and address challenges and opportunities facing the company. Through BRGs, Honda embraces and encourages inclusive and innovative thinking as well as provides career and development opportunities.

One such group at HSC is the LGBTQ BRG. The purpose of this BRG is to provide and foster a safe and open environment for LGBTQ associates and allies. The group welcomes members regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. This practice provides a network which promotes professional development and empowers associates to share their diverse perspective.

would feel they are truly welcomed, valued, safe and free to be themselves regardless of nationalities, races, genders and sexual orientations. Historically, workplace environments create the biggest anxieties for members of the LGBT community because they feel the need to downplay their authentic selves.

Through efforts of the BRG, they hope to impress upon HSC how inclusion and diversity may look. This includes establishing a sense of belonging for all associates, empathetic leadership, which models inclusion and diversity and acknowledgement of the biases while embracing the differences. Rich Robinson, chair of LGBTQ BRG stated, "Diversity and Inclusion and BRG efforts of the company are not only voicing support for the LGBT community, but it also about providing opportunities for growth, learning, networking in non-profit communities and building business etiquette skills."

The officers of the LGBTQ BRG share similar views and realize there is always the challenge of not being understood by those who have differing viewpoints. The goal is to coexist while respecting each person as an individual. The LGBTQ BRG at HSC has a leadership of four associates: Rich Robinson, chair; Catherine Guzman, co-chair; Lonza Quillen, treasurer; and Bennie Reid III, communications chair. It also includes two members of management: Ron Freed BRG executive sponsor and Michele Pridgen BRG advisor. The BRGs are an initiative of the Inclusion and Diversity Department lead by Lucinda Fountain.

In an increasingly competitive marketplace, being committed to diversity and inclusion enables HSC to be a more effective, empathetic and responsible corporate citizen while producing associates who share the same core beliefs of the company. The LGBTQ BRG at HSC is equipped with diverse views that allow opportunities for inclusive engagement, leading to a higher performance culture and enabling its member to realize they have the potential to help position their company for continued growth within the global marketplace. Honda is taking steps towards an inclusive workplace and measuring the results to send the message that our business wants progress, that it wishes to have the LGBT community on-board and that it is serious about diversity. This is a great leap in the right direction for anyone, regardless of his or her sexuality, and it is a sign of Honda's Philosophy of "Respect for the Individual."



Every October, LGBT History Month is observed, and the work of the BRG at HSC helps to further visibility and bring awareness to how diversity and inclusion could look in the workplace. Everyone deserves to see successful people who resemble them and to whom they can relate, whether those people share the same race, gender, sexual identity or orientation.

The group was formed in September 2017 in an effort to reduce isolation in the workplace while creating an atmosphere where everyone



4 HABITS FOR FIT FINANCES



Are you feeling good about your finances? Or do phrases like “account balance,” “credit score” and “retirement savings” give you a twinge of anxiety? Don’t worry. You’re in good company. Only 24 percent of

millennials have basic financial literacy, according to the National Endowment for Financial Education. When it comes to getting their financial house in order, most millennials would prefer not to set foot in that proverbial house in the first place. Getting yourself out of debt and building enough savings to cover your expenses in an emergency is a marathon, not a sprint. Small, incremental changes in your financial habits today can make a big difference in your financial health months or even years from now.

Take these steps today to spruce up your money management process and get yourself on the path to financial health.

*** Check your credit score.** Before you start the work of realigning your finances, you should check your credit score and review your credit report. It helps to know where you stand financially, and the good news is, even if your credit score is not as high as you’d like it to be, you can take steps to improve it. Establishing a history of on-time payments and maintaining a healthy credit utilization ratio are two things that could improve your credit score quickly.

*** Knock down your debt.** Track down all your accounts--checking, savings, investment, credit cards and other loans--and do the math to find out your net worth. That’s your benchmark to help you track your progress. In the beginning, the truth can hurt. However, knowing how much you have in savings and knowing how much you owe gives you a valuable blueprint for where you need to direct your energy. From there, put together a household budget, and figure out where you can trim expenses, so you can pay ahead on your debts, one account at a time.

*** Automate your savings.** You’re much more likely to accumulate savings when you make the decision once and let the rest happen automatically. Log onto your bank account and set up an automatic transfer from checking to savings, starting with a small amount, preferably timed with your regular pay day. If you can manage to set aside \$85 a month in a year’s time, you’ll have set aside a full \$1,000. That’s a decent emergency fund for things like car repairs and doctor bills.

*** Open a retirement account.** Here’s another way to automate savings. If you haven’t done so already, start contributing to a retirement plan. Even better, if your employer makes a plan and a match available to employees, sign up as soon as you can. If you can’t afford to contribute the full amount to get the full match, start with a small percentage, and slowly add on.

Taking the first steps to gain control of your finances isn’t easy. Setting up good financial habits today can leave you in a better place tomorrow.



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YOUR HOME COULD BE YOUR GREATEST ASSET. PROTECT IT.



Here's the good news: Property values continue to rebound after the Great Recession. In fact, Zillow.com reports that as of August 31, 2017, the median home value in the U.S. stood at \$201,900—an increase of 6.9 percent in just one year.

So what's the bad news? In 2013, the last year for which there are statistics, home mortgage debt was the largest household liability, representing between two-thirds and three-quarters of total household debt.¹

Given these statistics, it's easy to see why so many new homeowners are eager to purchase mortgage insurance from their lenders. That way, if something tragic happens, they can be sure that the lenders will be paid in full and that their families will retain ownership of this valuable asset.

Be sure to consider all the options. It's important, however, for homeowners to realize that there are other ways to protect the lifestyle and wealth of their families. Personally owned life insurance, for example, can perform many of the same functions as mortgage insurance, but it offers greater flexibility. That's because life insurance gives your beneficiaries the freedom to determine how the death benefit will be spent. Let's take a look at why that might be important.

You—and your loved ones—may want greater flexibility.

While your family can always use the death benefit to retire the mortgage, there may be more immediate financial needs. With life insurance, they have the option of using the money to pay medical bills, cover funeral expenses, or simply keep the household up and running in your absence. It may also make sense for your loved ones to pay down the mortgage over time, so they can use the insurance proceeds for other purposes and take advantage of the mortgage interest deduction. What's more, personally owned life insurance is portable, so as long as your policy remains in good standing, you will remain covered—no matter where you live or how many times you move.



Of course, most people don't buy a home simply for its value—but now, more than ever, that is an important consideration. If your home—and any equity you have built up—represents your largest financial asset, be sure to weigh all your options and take whatever steps you can to protect it. No matter what you decide to do, there's a good chance that you—and your loved ones—will sleep

better for it.

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

¹ John C. Weicher, "The Distribution of Wealth in America, 1983-2013," Hudson Institute, January 31, 2017. <https://www.hudson.org/research/13095-the-distribution-of-wealth-in-america-1983-2013>

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ABB RANKS IN TOP THREE OF FORBES' LIST

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



ANDERSON BROTHERS BANK

MULLINS- Anderson Brothers Bank makes Forbes list of America's Best in State Banks. Anderson Brothers Bank ranked 3rd in the state of South Carolina as reported in Forbes inaugural Best-In-State Banks and Credit Unions in June. The banks and credit unions were not gauged by balance sheets and P&L statements but by surveys conducted by Statista of more than 25,000 customers in the U.S. on the opinions they had related to their current or former banking relationships with financial institutions. The customers rated on overall satisfaction with five standards' of trust, terms & conditions, branch services, digital services and financial advice.

"We are honored to have made the list out of only 124 banks nationally named," said Susan Grant, VP marketing director of Anderson Brothers Bank. "We are most grateful for our customers for participating in the surveys and sharing their experiences about the bank. We all try to live up to the slogan of, 'Treating You Like Family' each and every day. I think it all goes back to Anderson Brothers Bank's roots that still exist today of doing what's right for the customer, employees and the communities served that sets us apart from all the rest."

Read full article here: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kurtbadenhausen/2018/06/28/the-best-banks-and-credit-unions-in-every-state/#61c5d0b14502>

BRANTON NAMED BRANCH OPERATIONS COORDINATOR



Sheryl Branton

LORIS-Anderson Brothers Bank is pleased to announce the recent promotion of Sheryl Branton to the position of branch operations coordinator at the Loris Main office. In her new role, Branton will direct and oversee operations while providing administrative and supervisory support within the branch.

Branton began her career with Anderson Brothers Bank over 18 years ago as a teller/CSR and then later promoted to head teller. She lives in Loris with her husband Carl of 25 years and two children, Adam and Kelsey. Branton is a member of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church and serves as the youth leader.

"Sheryl is a talented, hands-on banker and her strengths and experience have proven to be invaluable as we continue to grow in Horry County," said Carolyn Allred, branch manager of Loris Main with Anderson Brothers Bank. "She has an enthusiastic desire to contribute to the continued growth of the bank and has demonstrated outstanding customer service, strengthens customer relationships through her hard work she has earned this promotion."

BRANCH OPERATIONS COORDINATOR -SHANNON BRYANT



Shannon Bryant

MARION—Anderson Brothers Bank announces the promotion of Shannon Bryant to branch operations coordinator of the Latta Office. Shannon joined Anderson Brothers Bank in August of 2016, where she serves our Dillon county customers at the Latta Office. As branch operations coordinator, Bryant will continue to assist customers with a full array of financial products and services including commercial and consumer deposits. In addition, she will provide administrative and supervisory support within the branch.

"Shannon is a talented, hands-on banker and her strengths and experience have proved to be invaluable as we continue to grow in Dillon County," said Johnny Floyd, vice president Marion/Dillon county executive with Anderson Brothers Bank. "She has an enthusiastic desire to contribute to the continued growth of the bank and has consistently demonstrated outstanding customer service. Shannon is focused on strengthening our customer relationships and committed to community involvement while representing our bank and working closely with our customers."

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FIRST BANK DONATES TO AREA NON-PROFITS

Submitted by Ashley Christenbury, Branch Manager/Assistant Vice President

FIRST BANK

In July 2018, the First Bank Foundation donated a total of \$33,150 in the local Pee Dee communities. The non-profits that received donations include All 4 Autism, American Heart Association, Big Brothers and Big Sisters,

Boys and Girls Club, Building Families, Cheraw Rescue Squad, Chesterfield Family YMCA, Chesterfield Fire Department, Coulter Long National Alumni Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Florence Branch NAACP, Florence County Disabilities Foundation, Florence Darlington Technical College Foundation, Francis Marion University Foundation, Girl Scout Council of the Pee Dee, Greater Florence Habitat for Humanity, Help4Kids, Hospice of Chesterfield County, House of Hope, Junior Leadership Florence Program, Lighthouse Ministries, McCarn Community Ministry Food Bank, Mercy In Me Free Medical Clinic, National Wild Turkey Federation, Northeastern Technical College, Pathfinders United, Pee Dee Area Boy Scouts of America, Pee Dee Area Coalition, Pee Dee Land Trust, Relay For Life, SNAC, St. David's Cemetery Association, The School Foundation, Town of Cheraw Jazz Fest, United Way of Chesterfield County, United Way of Florence and Wallace Rescue Squad.



First Bank Foundation awards \$33,150 to area non-profits as part of its commitment to Service Excellence and serving the communities in which it serves.

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TIPS TO HELP FIRST-TIMERS NAVIGATE THE FAST-PACED HOUSING MARKET



In city after city, home prices are on the rise, up 2.3 percent on average from April 2017 and 2018. And there are fewer houses on the market to choose from, with total housing inventory down by 11.3 percent.

Based on home sales in April 2018, the national supply of inventory was at 2.5 months,

making it a strong seller's market. (A 6-month supply of inventory historically indicates a market that is balanced equally between buyers and sellers.)

What's fueling the demand? More members of the millennial generation entering the housing market, among other factors.

If you're ready to stop renting and start enjoying the benefits of home ownership, finding the perfect house within your price range can seem daunting, especially in a seller's market. Keep these things in mind to find and close on that special home.

1. Keep an eye on your credit score

The interest rate of your mortgage matters a great deal. Even a fraction of a percentage can add (or subtract) thousands of dollars over the life of a 30-year loan. One thing that can influence your interest rate is your credit score--it's just one way for the lender to determine how likely you are to repay the loan. Well before you begin browsing properties online, take steps to get your credit score in the strongest

possible position. Review your credit report and report errors immediately. Make on-time payments and put off opening new credit accounts until after the mortgage is finalized.

2. Work with a full-time, experienced real estate agent

Plenty of online services claim you can save money by completing the process without a real estate agent. But as many buyers discover, the savings don't always come through as promised. In fact, going through this complex process without professional guidance can definitely lead to costly problems later. If you work with an agent, you'll get to work with a pro who's in touch with the local market and can lend a helping hand every step of the way. Their expertise can help you find that perfect house and help you craft the right strategy for your offer. Visit remax.com to find a professional agent in your area.

3. Play to your strengths

When you find the right house, you may not be the only one making an offer on the property. That can be intimidating. But keep in mind, it's not always about coming in with the highest dollar amount. Buyers have different motivations to sell. Some may be in a situation where they want to close and move out as soon as possible. They'll be less likely to work with buyers who have their own houses to sell, making first-time buyers more attractive candidates.

Buying a house is a big step, and in the heat of a seller's market, it takes extra patience and perseverance. Find the right real estate agent to help you through the process, and moving day may arrive sooner than you expected.

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DR. ERICA JAMES DISPELS RUMORS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

by Jennifer Robinson



Dr. Erika Robinson

Mental Health Awareness is as important as any health awareness. People often take for granted that protecting our minds is a major part of holistic wellness. Just as treatment is necessary for any physical disease or disability, it is also necessary for mental disabilities. Many people find difficulty in believing or comprehending that caring for one's mental health should or must be a priority. It is first important to be informed about mental issues that

many people face. There are many types of mental illnesses (www.webmd.com), including the following:

- **Anxiety disorders:** People with anxiety disorders respond to certain objects or situations with fear and dread as well as with physical signs of anxiety or panic, such as a rapid heartbeat and sweating. An anxiety disorder is diagnosed if the person's response is not appropriate for the situation, if the person cannot control the response, or if the anxiety interferes with normal functioning. Anxiety disorders include generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, social anxiety disorder and specific phobias.

- **Mood disorders:** These disorders involve persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy, or fluctuations from extreme happiness to extreme sadness. The most common mood disorders are depression and bipolar disorder.

- **Psychotic disorders:** Psychotic disorders involve distorted awareness and thinking. Two of the most common symptoms of psychotic disorders are hallucinations -- the experience of images or sounds that are not real, such as hearing voices -- and delusions, which are false, fixed beliefs that the ill person accepts as true, despite evidence to the contrary. Schizophrenia is an example of a psychotic disorder.

- **Impulse control and addiction disorders:** People with impulse control disorders are unable to resist urges, or impulses, to perform acts that could be harmful to themselves or others. Pyromania (starting fires), kleptomania (stealing) and compulsive gambling are examples of impulse control disorders. Alcohol and drugs are common objects of addictions. Often, people with these disorders become so involved with the objects of their addiction that they begin to ignore responsibilities and relationships.

- **Personality disorders:** People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits that are distressing to the person and/or cause problems in work, school or social relationships. In addition, the person's patterns of thinking and behavior significantly differ from the expectations of society and are so rigid that they interfere with the person's normal functioning. Examples include antisocial personality disorder, obsessive-compulsive personality disorder and paranoid personality disorder.

- **Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD):** People with OCD are plagued by constant thoughts or fears that cause them to perform certain rituals or routines. The disturbing thoughts are called obsessions, and the rituals are called compulsions. An example is a person with an unreasonable fear of germs who constantly washes his or her hands.

- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD):** PTSD is a condition that can develop following a traumatic and/or terrifying event, such as a sexual or physical assault, the unexpected death of a loved one or a natural disaster. People with PTSD often have lasting and frightening thoughts and memories of the event and tend to be emotionally numb.

Dr. Erica James, assistant professor of psychology at Francis Marion University, works closely with students who have either experienced mental illness or plan to pursue careers in the area of

mental health. She discussed many of the misconceptions surrounding mental illness. One popular misconception is that it is a sign of weakness. Because the brain or mind is unseen or cannot be touched to determine what type care is needed, most people have treated mental illness as imaginary. This is often true in many cultures. Dr. James stated that she did a research study on mental health and black women. She noticed and wanted to study how many of them live the "superwoman" ideal of putting the needs of everyone else before themselves. They don't see the struggles they have as mental but as a need for simple rest or increased spiritual faith practice. Dr. James felt this logic should be reexamined because everyone should consider mental well-being the same as they would consider the wellness of any other part of their body. Dr. James's work on the "Superwoman Schema" encouraged and supported her theory that many women, especially women of color, fear mental illness stigma and do not seek treatment because it feels like failure.

During Mental Health Awareness month and every month, people can be better informed by researching information on mental treatment and counselors and therapists in their area. People tend to feel better after they receive positive wellness reports from their physicians. The same can be true if they trust more in their mental health "physician" for care about the instrument at their core of their physical health, their mind.

TEN

SURVIVAL TIPS

for living with a

MENTAL ILLNESS

- 1 find a psychologist or psychiatrist who treats you with compassion and respect.
- 2 once you find a treatment plan that works, stick to it.
- 3 trust your gut.
- 4 practice self-care.
- 5 find a purpose.
- 6 accept love into your life.
- 7 accept yourself for the beautiful and unique person that you are.
- 8 connect with people who are going through similar experiences.
- 9 learn to advocate for yourself.
- 10 never give up on yourself.

FROM PASSION TO PROFESSION: LACTATION NURSE CHRONICLES JOURNEY

by Angela Crosland



Lela Gregg, Lactation Consultant

Research supports the belief that breastfeeding yields benefits for both mother and child. For Carolinas Hospital System Lactation Consultant Lela Gregg, the decision to breastfeed did have its advantages, but the side effects should have come with the label, “Don’t try this at home.” Gregg said her experiences breastfeeding were wrought with pain, tears and anxiety.

She said much of the challenges could have been averted if the wife and mother of five (Mariya, Sa’sha, Natylia, Roxie, William) received proper guidance in the process.

“As I navigated having newborn babies and breastfeeding, I felt lost. The lost feeling could have been avoided if I had early lactation support,” Gregg said. “I experienced several issues such as bleeding nipples, thrush, bleb (blister), low milk supply, and mastitis (inflammation).”

The firsthand experience turned her situation into a full-time job. Originally from Waterloo, Iowa, she had already worked in healthcare for five years and received a bachelor’s degree in health administration from Ultimate Medical Academy and National American University. Nearly two years ago, she became a certified lactation consultant, safe sleep coordinator and baby-friendly chair at Carolinas Hospital System’s Women’s Center.

The formal training was required, but it was real life that mostly equipped Gregg for the position. After her last child was born, Gregg became passionate about advocating for breastfeeding and helping mothers have a positive experience nursing their children.

“Surprisingly, I had five different breastfeeding experiences and four different types of deliveries,” Gregg said. “The challenges meant I was only able to breastfeed my children three to five months. It made me feel

like a failure when I had to supplement feeding them with formula. When I was pregnant with my fourth child, I did not want to breastfeed. The first three were so difficult I didn’t want to go through the same heartache.”

With love and support from her husband and guidance from a lactation nurse, Gregg was able to map out a strategy for her life and translate it to others.



“I received lactation support, and it made all the difference. I was able to breastfeed for 11 months with my fourth and fifth child. The lactation consultant explained that breast was best but supplementing with formula was okay too,” Gregg said. “In other words, a fed baby is the best baby. She also taught me how to properly breastfeed and the correct way to dry up your milk when you are ready to stop breastfeeding,” Gregg said. “The whole

experience planted a seed in me to help other mothers enjoy breastfeeding.”

She hopes just sharing her story, and what she learned with new mothers gives them encouragement to carry on in the breastfeeding process.

“Now I recognize the exhausted and defeated look on their (mothers) faces. But, I wanted to do more,” she said.

She realized she’d have a greater impact if she could find a way to turn her passion into practice.

“I am a simple woman who gets joy from my family and helping new mothers,” says Gregg. “For me, these are amazing reasons to get out of bed and go to work every morning.”

For more information about breastfeeding and the new mother experience, contact Gregg at The Women’s Center at Carolinas Hospital System in Florence. She can be reached at 843-674-4662 or Lgregg2@carolinashospital.com.



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SCPHCA NAMES HOPEHEALTH'S VAN CAMP

Submitted by Donna Tracy, Communication Coordinator



Yvonne Van Camp

Yvonne Van Camp, director of clinical quality at the HopeHealth Medical Plaza in Florence, has been named the 2018 Champion of Practice Transformation by the S.C. Primary Health Care Association.

The award recognizes the impact of quality initiatives overseen by Van Camp at HopeHealth and specifically outlines her work on improving colorectal cancer screening rates by implementing evidence-based strategies.

“The award was designed to recognize the exemplary efforts of a team member in a community-based health care setting who has demonstrated a commitment to patient-centered care through innovative practice transformation efforts,” said Katherine Plunkett who assists community health centers with clinical quality improvement and practice transformation initiatives with the SCPHCA.

Yvonne was nominated for her great skills, innovative ideas, and techniques in helping improve all quality measures, especially colorectal cancer screening rates for her patients. Her nominator has worked with Yvonne for two years on a CDC grant project, and she has been a champion in helping implement evidence base strategies to increase these screening rates at HopeHealth. Her leadership, knowledge, family-centered approach, and innovative ideas, have shaped and influenced her staff, patients, and the sites as a whole.

Van Camp explained practice transformation is about becoming a patient-centered medical home by putting the patient at the center of our care and transforming our practice to improve four factors:

- Financial responsibility
- Medical outcomes
- Patient satisfaction
- Provider & staff satisfaction

Van Camp said the peer acknowledgment imparted by the award gives her a “sense of accomplishment” about her work at HopeHealth, which has contributed to HopeHealth’s recognition as a Level 3 patient-centered medical home last year for using evidence-based, patient-centered processes that focus on highly coordinated care and long-term, participative relationships.

HopeHealth is one of 23 nonprofit, federally qualified health centers in South Carolina. We provide quality and affordable health care services to individuals in Florence, Clarendon and Williamsburg Counties, and Infectious Diseases services in Aiken, Clarendon, Florence, Orangeburg and Williamsburg Counties. To become a patient, call 843-667-9414 or visit hope-health.org. For questions or more information, email tstraus@hope-health.org or call 843-245-2291.



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CHS WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIANS

Submitted by Carolinas Hospital System

Carolinas Hospital System is pleased to welcome interventional cardiologist, Sam Rahman, M.D., and gastroenterologist Vera Zaraket, M.D., to the Carolinas Hospital System medical staff.



Sam Rahman, M.D.

Sam Rahman, M.D., has joined Carolinas Medical Alliance - Cardiology. He received his medical degree from the University of Damascus and completed his residency in internal medicine at The University Hospital, in Damascus, Syria. Dr. Rahman is board certified in interventional cardiology, nuclear cardiology, cardiovascular medicine, echocardiography and internal medicine and certified by the Heart Rhythm Society.



Vera Zaraket, M.D.

He comes to Carolinas from Mercy Health/St. Rita's Hospital in Lima, Ohio. While there he served as interventional cardiologist and was the medical director of the pacemaker and devices clinic and the congestive heart failure clinic. Dr. Rahman completed his interventional cardiology fellowship at the University of Arizona, in Tucson, Ariz.

Vera Zaraket, M.D. has joined Carolinas Medical Alliance - Gastroenterology. She comes to Carolinas from Staten Island University Hospital, Northwell Health, in Staten Island, N.Y. While there, she completed her residency in internal medicine and a fellowship in gastroenterology and hepatology.

She received her medical degree from St. Joseph University of Beirut, in Beirut, Lebanon. Zaraket is also board certified in internal medicine.

Please join us in welcoming them to our hospital and to the greater Florence community.

CHS - MARION WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIAN

Submitted by John Russell, Marketing Coordinator, Carolinas Medical Alliance



Dr. Sara Camarata

MARION-Carolinas Hospital System-Marion welcomes Sara Camarata, D.O., to Marion Medical Group. Dr. Camarata practices osteopathic and family medicine.

She provides all aspects of family medicine, including osteopathic manipulative therapy, to patients of all ages, in office procedures and gynecology procedures. Camarata will also serve as the medical director of Mullins Nursing Center, and she is on the medical staff of Carolinas

Hospital System— Marion.

Camarata received her undergraduate degree from Saginaw Valley State University and her medical degree from Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich. She completed her residency at Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine Statewide Campus System (McLaren-Bay Region).

Dr. Camarata is accepting new patients. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, please call 843-423-0760, or go to CarolinasMedicalAlliance.com.

CHS HELPS IMPROVE OUTCOMES OF PROSTATE PATIENTS

by Angela Crosby



Dr. Charles Wooten

Research and treatments in the world of cancer are ever evolving. That is especially true for patients diagnosed with prostate cancer. Even as these developments occur, physicians are doing their best to curtail one of the greatest deterrents of radiation therapy and surgical techniques: side effects.

Those dreaded words of “May cause...” are preceded by words like “incontinence” all the way to “further damage to major organs.” Dr. Charles Wooten, medical director of Radiation Oncology

at Carolinas Hospital System in Florence says there is a way to reduce the risks associated with radiation treatments - hydrogel spacers. The procedure temporarily creates space between the prostate and the rectum to protect the rectum from radiation exposure during treatment. The new procedure is responsible for marked improvement in survival rates of radiation patients.

“It creates distance between the two, moving the organs away from the other disease sites,” says Wooten. “The recovery is faster and the outcomes are better.”

The hydrogel is injected prior to starting radiation treatment and is gradually absorbed by the body after radiation therapy is complete. In addition, it allows doctors to do short courses of radiation therapy. The same treatment that might have taken nine weeks, now takes only about a week. Wooten is currently the only physician in the region certified to perform this treatment and is excited about the impact it has had on his community.

“I’m sold on this stuff and it works,” says Wooten.

Wooten gives much credit to Allen Abernethy, director of Radiology at Carolinas Hospital System, for getting him started and likewise he plans to push the idea along to others in neighboring regions.

“They really helped me make it possible to offer this treatment,” says Wooten. “I’m encouraging others to do it as well and set a trend for everyone else to follow locally and regionally,” says Wooten.

Five months into his practice in Florence he is already discussing other ways to utilize the treatment and ways in which they currently use the procedure. Wooten says that using the hydrogel spacing along with the MRI plan during radiation is already yielding impressive results. Doctors say the method allows an MRI to get a better picture and aim at the cancer to significantly decrease the side effects of radiation therapy.

The procedure has revolutionized prostate cancer treatment at Carolinas Hospital System and in the coming years it will be the standard, he adds. As for more expansive use, Wooten is mostly hush about it for the time being but there are things on the horizon. He did share that some of those advancements are in the areas of cervix and pancreatic cancer, but there will be others as well.

“I’m looking into more treatment and I’m excited about a new procedure,” he says.

Wooten can’t think of a better place to make such a mark in medicine.

“We interviewed a lot of places. (Florence was) just right for us,” says Wooten. “I fell in love with everyone I met here. Couldn’t ask for a better environment.”

Wooten and their three children have made their way to the area by way of Columbia, but he’s originally from Augusta, Ga. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Georgia and completed his residency at the University of Kentucky. He is a graduate of Mercer University School of Medicine and has nearly a decade of experience in the field of medicine.

For more information, call Carolinas Hospital System’s Radiation Oncology Department at 843- 674-2470 or visit CarolinasHospital.com.

CAROLINAS
HOSPITAL SYSTEM



FLORENCE CELEBRATES PATIENTS WITH SAVINGS, SPECIALS AND A NEW CENTER

Submitted by Michelle Fields, Director, Physician's Plan Weight Loss + Wellness



Celebrating Patients Appreciating Day. Front row Michelle Field and Kodi Hoffman; back row Amber Brown, Melissa Street and Stephanie Wicks

At Physician's Plan Weight Loss + Wellness, we love an opportunity to celebrate our patients. This year's Patient Appreciation Day was an unprecedented success! We helped countless patients save 20 percent on every service and product offered in our center. Our purple party festivities featured prizes, raffles, games, gift bags, food and fun too. Thank you to all our loyal weight loss and medical spa patients. Here

are some fun photos from our biggest sale of the year.

This was a wonderful way to show off our newly expanded location in West Gate Square. We updated the new suite to better serve our patients. In addition to moving over to Suite I, we have expanded our aesthetics services offered as well. Continue to count on us for Obagi products (the only Obagi location in Florence), shop our new Skin Medica products online with convenient shipping to your home, and relax and rejuvenate your skin with our esthetician. A Skin Wellness facial is a perfect place to start for beautiful skin.



Azalee Shaw spins the wheel for big win.

Did you miss Patient Appreciation Day? Never fear. New specials happen monthly. Take advantage of some tasty food products that help keep you on track. Enjoy 20 percent off these fan favorites in October: Nuts n More Peanut Butter Packets, Quest Cookies, Gummy Bears and Popcorn. Snuggle up to 20 percent off Hot Chocolate & Biscotti in November. Are you a new patient? Take advantage



Debra McKenzie and Kodi Hoffman enjoying the celebration

of the new patient special pricing offered in Diversity Works Magazine© this month. For winter, keep your eyes out for Twelve Deals of Giftmas. Stuff your stocking or a friend's. Giftmas begins in December. The huge savings on Botox and fillers, weight loss, products, medical spa services and more will leave you feeling FaLaLa-bulous.

Or stop in anytime to join our team for a healthy weight loss challenge and lose 6-10 lbs in 6 days on our FAST PLAN! Like us on FaceBook, follow us on Instagram or check out our specials on our website at www.PhysiciansPlan.com.

Our team celebrates every milestone with our patients. We strive to provide the best weight loss experience in the area with no judgements and lots of weight loss tools that work. When asked about their experience, here's what some of our current Florence patients shared:

- "Everything, especially the dietary counseling I received from Melissa." – 8/18/18 follow up patient
- "Friendly staff and very knowledgeable about health." – 8/24/18 B12 injections patient
- "As soon as you walk in every one is so welcoming and you feel so comfortable." – 8/8/18 weight loss patient
- "Everyone was so nice and caring." – 8/9/18 weight loss patient
- "Great staff has me excited." – 8/8/18 weight loss patient
- "Kati!! She's the best! My skin always looks great!!" – 8/6/18 med spa patient

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PHYSICIAN RETURNS TO HER ROOTS - THE CAROLINAS

by Angela Crosland



Dr. Shauna Hemingway

MARION- Marion, S.C., is known for its Spanish Moss dripping from the treetops, the historic feel of its downtown and its close proximity to the bustling tourist attraction that is Myrtle Beach. It's also where Dr. Shauna Hemingway hails and to some extent, she has returned to her roots. Hemingway joined the medical staff of Carolinas Hospital System (CHS) as an Obstetrics and Gynecological physician on Aug. 1 as part of Phillips & Coker OB-GYN practice in Florence. She joins Drs. Thomas

Phillips, Steven Coker, Heather Draeger, Jennifer Patchett and Emily Stonerock. Her offerings include gynecological and obstetric care for women of all ages. Hemingway specializes in minimally invasive surgery, such as laparoscopic hysterectomy, and includes contraceptive counseling, placement of long acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) and intrauterine devices (IUD).

The office is nestled in Suite B of The Women's Center on the Carolinas Hospital System campus, in Florence, at 1590 Freedom Blvd, a mere 23 miles from where she was born and reared. It's the strong ties to the community that brought her back.

"I felt it would be a good fit because my family is here and my husband's family is here," says Hemingway. "(There's) something special about taking care of women I've grown up with. I felt I could be a benefit to them because I have roots here. It's nice to be able to see someone who you see as a friend, somebody who can be a support for you."

Her practice allows her to care for women she's known and those she'll get to know throughout the span of their lifetime because of the continuity of care. She believes it also will help her build a strong patient-provider relationship.

Dr. Hemingway has already made quite a go of it during her first month and first night on call at Carolinas. A night "on call" for the youthful physician, saw her making rounds at local hospitals at various hours to treat both her own patients and those who were not.

"I called the ladies (colleagues) all for different things," says Hemingway. "It went really well and I had great support and autonomy (so it was) overall a great start."

It's all in a day's work, and it's what she signed up for, says Hemingway who has known for much of her life she wanted to be an OB/GYN. Making rounds was practically a way of life for her as she joyfully attended the graduations and residencies of family members.

In fact, the influence of her two aunts who are now practicing physicians, and an abundance of other aunts who cheered her on, provided the poise and readiness for her debut in Florence.

"Coming from a family full of women and medicine, they always expected a lot of us," says Hemingway of her passion. "I really think it (bending toward the medical profession) came from a joy of being around them. Women are the first teachers of their family and of their children."

Hemingway says she can't emphasize enough how important mentoring in the developmental process is. While attending the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) in Charleston as a resident, she was a student liaison, providing a comprehensive overview of the program.

"I spent a couple of months out of the year with them (mentees) showing them the life of a resident. It's really something I enjoy doing. These are young women I still talk to and work with today," says Hemingway.

For those who may not know how to further an interest in medicine, Hemingway offers a bit of advice.

"Find mentors and use your resources," she says. "You don't have to know a physician but recognize those who can be helpful to get you into the field you want. Making connections and finding good mentors is the most important thing."

The mentoring nature has carried over into her profession. It's how she views her relationship with patients.

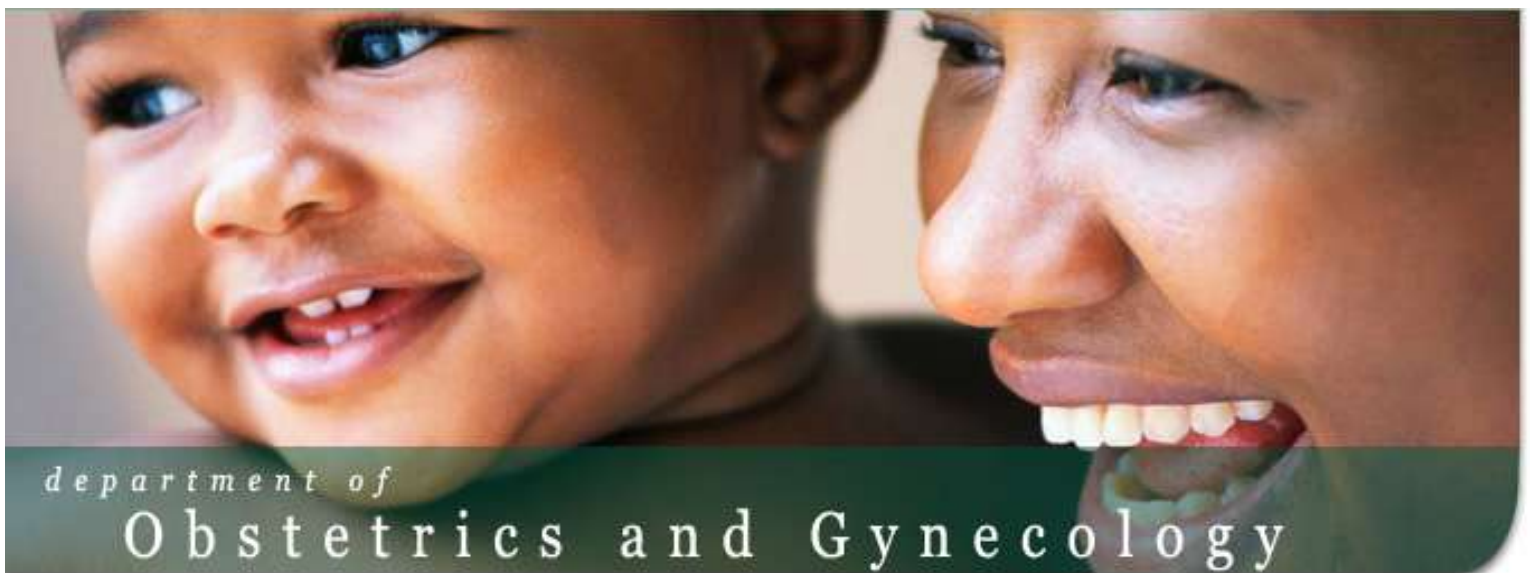
"I really want to focus initially on patient care and show women I am very similar to them in a lot of ways," says Hemingway. "My main goal is to see that they receive healthy holistic care."

One way she hopes to accomplish this is by becoming more involved in the community she serves. A recent treat for Hemingway involved attending the convocation of her high school alma mater.

"The convocation was at one of the gyms where I used to play recreational basketball," says Hemingway. "It was just nice to be back home and nice to be well-received. I plan on getting involved in the community with some projects in the coming years."

Dr. Hemingway earned her undergraduate degree from the University of South Carolina before completing her medical degree and residency at MUSC.

She is accepting new patients at Phillips & Coker OB/GYN, an affiliate of Carolinas Medical Alliance, and is a member of the medical staff at Carolinas Hospital System. For more information go to: CarolinasMedicalAlliance.com or call 843-665-9581.



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What are opioids?

Prescription opioids are powerful, pain-reducing medicines. You can find them in pill forms, syrups or even prescription patches. Commonly prescribed opioids include hydrocodone, morphine and oxycodone.

But they also can cause overdose deaths. Every day, 115 Americans die from opioid overdoses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Why leftover opioids are dangerous

The United States is battling an opioid crisis. A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that up to 71 percent of opioid tablets prescribed after surgery went unused. Trouble with opioids can start at home, where unused medicines are stored in cabinets or drawers and are ingested either intentionally or unintentionally by people who do not have a medical need for these prescriptions.

“We’re facing a public health tragedy right in our own backyards; opioid addiction and overdose affect communities across America,” explained U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb. “We know that people fighting addiction often began by accessing prescription opioids from a friend or family member. It’s critical we all do our part in safely disposing of these medicines once they’re no longer needed as part of our effort to ending this crisis.”

Protect your family and your community

Make sure your medicines do not get into the wrong hands. According to data from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, half of people who misused prescription opioids got them from a friend or family member.

Unused opioids can also pose a risk to kids. Even child-resistant containers cannot completely prevent a child from taking medicines prescribed to someone else. Emergency departments see thousands of patients for opioid overdose and addiction each year, according to data from the Nationwide Emergency Department Sample. As more opioids are being prescribed to adults, the risk of both accidental and intentional exposure increases for children and adolescents. Grandparents, neighbors and others who take care of children should make sure they have disposed of any unused medicines. Opioids also can be harmful to pets.

“In the last two decades, the FDA has received heartbreaking reports of accidental exposure to powerful prescription pain medicines such as fentanyl patches--most of them in children under 2 years old,” added FDA Center for Drug Evaluation and Research Director Dr. Janet Woodcock. “That’s why disposing of unneeded medicines is such an important step in keeping your family safe.”

Disposing of unused medicines can help turn the tide on the devastating opioid crisis affecting so many American families. Proper disposal of unused prescription opioids saves lives. Learn more at www.fda.gov/DrugDisposal.



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READY TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

by Kim Williams



MAT team (pictured left to right): Heather Clark, Wendi Sutherlin and Christopher Bullard

HARTSVILLE - Wendi Sutherlin completed her bachelor's degree in social work from Columbia College. She soon completed her master's from the University of South Carolina as a licensed master social worker. To further her education and enable her to help more people, she became a certified addictions counselor. All of these accomplishments prepared her for the positions she presently holds at Rubicon Family Counseling Services as a clinical supervisor and (Medicated Assisted Treatment) MAT coordinator. Sutherlin proudly works with the staff there to provide prevention, intervention, and treatment services to individuals, which lead to improving the overall health of the community. Prior to her joining Rubicon Family Counseling Center in 2012, she began her career at The Phoenix Center (Greenville County Drug and Alcohol Commission).



Family group treatments build understanding, trust, and strength.

Sutherlin works diligently with the MAT program. The MAT team consists of a substance abuse specialist, Christopher Bullard and client care coordinator, Heather Clark. This program works to treat patients who are on a medication such as suboxone or vivitrol to address the medical aspect of alcohol addiction. Rubicon counselors work collaboratively to treat the disease of



Women work together toward complete self-acceptance and independence.

addiction from the psychological standpoint.

Sutherlin was excited to share about a fairly new program that began just this year. It is known as the HART project. Many times patients come in seeking treatment services, yet are unable to afford the care that they need. Thanks to the very generous funding by the Women's League of Hartsville and other

members of the Hartsville community, the HART project can step in to offer hope through being able to provide help to those people without having to tell them "no" for their lack of funds or resources.

Rubicon Family Counseling Services are ready and waiting to see whom they can help next. If you know of someone who might benefit from their services, please contact Wendi Sutherlin or her office at 843-332-4156.

Our Mission

The mission of Rubicon, Inc. is to respond selectively to identify human service needs in Darlington County through prevention, intervention and treatment strategies aimed at strengthening, enhancing and maintaining effective functioning of families and individuals, and generally improve the health status of community residents.

Our Vision

It is the vision of Rubicon to broaden its scope of services to become a viable and comprehensive family service center, capable of responding to an array of identified human service needs of families and children, including but not limited to substance abuse issues.

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OPIOID CRISIS ILLUMINATES THE NEED TO SEE PAIN MEDICINE SPECIALISTS



Experts in effective, safer pain management help people get their lives back.

The opioid crisis has made physicians increasingly wary about prescribing the potentially addictive drugs to their patients in pain. But there is a silver lining: experts in pain medicine, such as physician anesthesiologists, can create individualized

pain management plans that include alternatives to opioids that are not only safer, but also often work better.

Opioids, or narcotics, can be helpful for short-term relief, but they are not a long-term solution for managing pain because of their many downsides, from significant side effects to a high risk of dependence or addiction. Pain medicine specialists can help people in pain get relief and reduce or eliminate opioids often by using a combination of techniques from physical therapy and nerve blocks to non-addictive pain medications.

Opioids alleviated the excruciating pain 37-year-old mother of two Beth Hunt suffered while recovering from multiple surgeries after her leg was crushed in an accident. But after three months in the hospital on opioids, she came to rely on them just to be comfortable. Hunt turned to her doctor, who used ultrasound and tiny catheters, or tubes, to direct medication to the major nerves in her leg that were the source of the pain. This therapy reduced her opioid use by 90 percent while her leg healed and she learned to walk again. Now she is opioid-free, has regained her quality of life and is spending time being active with

her children.

Hunt never dreamed she'd become dependent on opioids, but her experience shows it can happen to anyone. ASA urges people to learn how the opioid crisis is changing the way physicians treat pain responsibly, and the reasons why your physician may limit or avoid prescribing opioids:

They are not the only option. While opioids can provide general pain relief for a short while, they are not the solution for all pain because:



*** There are more effective methods for treating pain in a specific site, including nerve blocks or stimulation therapy.**

*** People who take them can begin tolerating the dose and may need higher doses to get the same relief.**

There are many side effects and risks:

*** Addiction and dependence are major worries. If there are signs of risk for addiction, your physician may be more hesitant to prescribe opioids.**

*** Other side effects include sleepiness; constipation; depression; life-threatening shallow breathing; and slowed heart rate, which could be a sign of an overdose.**

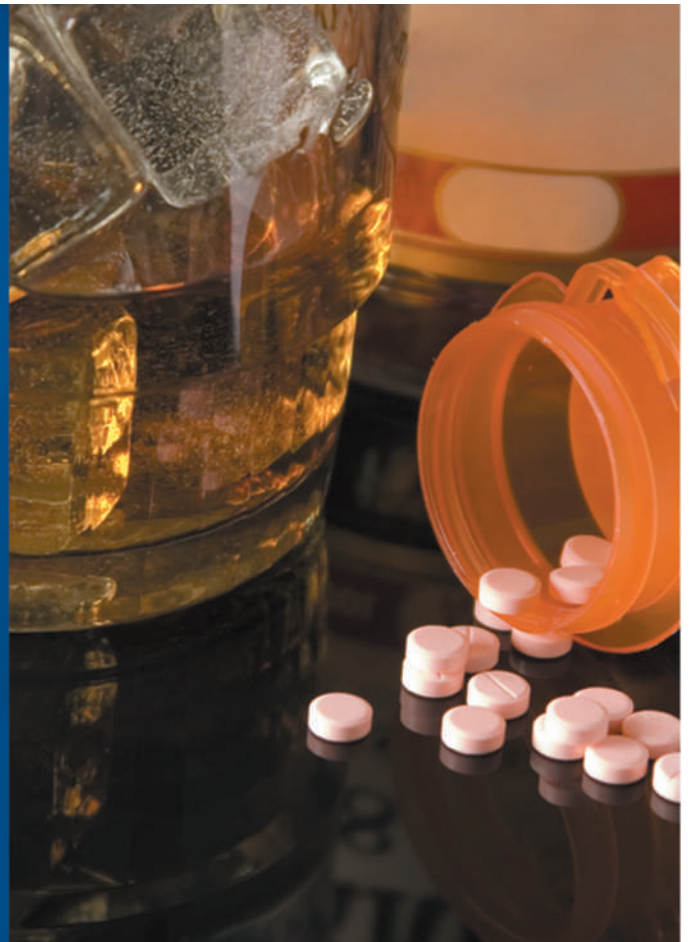
*** In older people, opioids can increase the risk of falling as well as interact with other medications, making them less effective or causing side effects.**

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BREAST MILK DONATIONS AT CAROLINA PINES REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Submitted by Jana E. Pye, Director of Marketing and Public Relations



Traci Skaris of Hartsville, SC with 111 ounces of breast milk she recently donated to the Mother's Milk Bank of SC via the depot site at Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center.

HARTSVILLE - August is National Breastfeeding Month, and one young mother in the Pee Dee has been helping premature infants that need the highly nutritious breast milk in the most amazingly generous way.

Traci Skaris of Hartsville is currently breastfeeding her second child, daughter Reagan, and has been donating extra breast milk to the Mother's Milk Bank of SC in Charleston via the satellite depot at Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center.

Skaris delivered both of her children at Carolina Pines. Son Aiden was born in 2014, and Reagan was born in March of 2018. "After a month, I started pumping to store up for work," said Skaris, a teacher at Hartsville High School. "Because I make a good amount of milk, our freezer got kind of full. I told my husband that maybe I should help donate to the Milk Bank. You don't want that liquid gold to go to waste. I hated throwing it out with my first baby."

"Having been a NICU nurse in the early part of my nursing career, I am very grateful to and in awe of moms like Traci who are willing and able to donate their excess breast milk to improve the outcomes of fragile very premature infants," said Holly Prescott RN BSN, the International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) for Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center.

The Milk Bank depository was opened at Carolina Pines two years ago, and it was through that initial story that Skaris heard about the program. Her donation on Aug. 17 was her largest donation consisting of 111 ounces, excess milk from pumping in a two-week period, which averages nearly eight ounces per day. The Mother's Milk Bank of SC sends all the supplies needed to her home. She then brings the frozen milk to the hospital labeled with a Milk Bank assigned ID to be stored in the depot freezer. Once the Milk Bank is notified of the donation, they send a cooler to the hospital that is sent back to Charleston. "They make it very easy," says Skaris.

With her first child, son Aiden, Skaris said she stopped nursing after a month and exclusively pumped. Her husband, Jonathan, convinced her to "stick it out" and continue nursing their daughter for a longer period of time. "He has been very supportive," she continued. "I listened to other people and they said after six to eight weeks it gets easier, and they were right. If we have a third, I'll definitely donate again."

Patti Pearce, RN, who works with nursery, postpartum and pediatrics at Carolina Pines, checked in the donated milk. "It's amazing how much she donates," said Pearce. "Not all mothers can do that. We

are always thrilled to hear our moms continuing to breastfeed their babies. We hope this inspires other mothers to do the same."

Benefits of Breast Milk to Premature and Full-Term Infants

Holly Prescott, RN, BSN, serves as International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) for Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center. An IBCLC is a healthcare professional who

specializes in the clinical management of breastfeeding. This includes teaching families about the benefits of breastfeeding, how to get the best start, supporting a family's feeding goals in the hospital and after discharge, working through breastfeeding challenges, teaching staff how to support breastfeeding mothers, staying up to date on evidence-based practices through continuing education and being a lactation resource for local healthcare providers.

Prescott shares the following information:

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life to achieve optimal growth, development and health, and thereafter, receive safe complimentary foods while continuing to breastfeed for up to two years and beyond. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and use of donor milk for very premature infants.

Each year, 800 very low birth-weight babies (infants born weighing less than 3.3 pounds) are born in South Carolina. When babies are born prematurely, many of their organs are not fully developed. This puts them at risk for a number of diseases within the first weeks of life. Many of these diseases can be prevented by making sure these tiny babies receive the antibodies and nutrients found in



human breast milk. Often, the stress of having a sick newborn can make producing breast milk difficult for many of these new moms. Unfortunately, donated human milk is in short supply. That's where moms who produce excess milk can help! Human milk donations are accepted at satellite depot sites throughout the state, such as the one we have created at Carolina Pines, frozen and then shipped to the Mother's Milk Bank of SC in Charleston. Donation starts with a 15-minute phone screen directly with the Milk Bank. The screening is very similar to blood donation screening.

What is it in human milk that keeps babies healthier than artificial milk?

- Research in the field of human milk has exploded. There are amazing long-term health benefits for sick infants and, of course, for healthy babies and their mothers. Research has found that 820,000 children's lives and billions of healthcare dollars could be saved globally if human babies were all fed human milk. Yet, only 40 percent of newborns are breastfed.
- Babies who receive human milk have fewer infections, especially gastrointestinal and respiratory, and lower rates of obesity, Type II diabetes and allergies, just to name a few benefits.
- Premature infants receiving mother's milk have a much lower incidence of a life threatening intestinal illness called NEC, gain weight faster and spend less time in the hospital.
- Mothers who choose to breastfeed have lower rates of postpartum hemorrhage, obesity, and breast and ovarian cancers.
- Colostrum is the small volume but high-quality milk a baby gets in the first couple of days of life before a mother's higher volume "mature milk" comes in between day 3 and 5. It is made specifically



BREAST MILK DONATIONS CONT'D

breastmilk
is
LOVE
turned into food
it takes
someone special
to share that love

for a newborn's tiny tummy at birth. Colostrum is full of antibodies that prime a baby's gut and help fight off infections until their own immune system kicks in.

- Human milk is often called White Blood. You may have heard the term "human microbiome" in the news recently. Researchers are finding that too few "good" bacteria and far too many "bad" bacteria in the gut leads to many diseases of children

and adults. Newborns get their good bacteria naturally from the birth canal, lying on their mother's skin soon after birth (called "skin to skin" time) and breast milk. This helps stimulate the immune system to grow. It is nature's yogurt for your baby. Overuse of antibiotics, caesarian sections and the low rate of breastfeeding effect this delicate balance.

- Just one bottle of artificial milk introduced into the gut changes it's pH and bacterial flora upsetting the balance of a mother's first gift to her newborn. When a baby has health issues at birth, you can see why human milk is especially important.

- The longer the breastfeeding period and the longer exclusivity, the greater the protection. Choosing to feed your child your breastmilk is personalized medicine that has life-long health benefits!

For more information about the Mother's Milk Bank of South Carolina and how you can help, visit www.scmilkbank.org or call Carolina Pines Regional Medical Center nursery 843-339-4369 and ask to speak with the lactation consultant about milk donation, breastfeeding classes or other breastfeeding questions.



Photo by Steve LaBadessa.

It only takes
1/4 ounce of
donated breast milk
to help a premature baby thrive.

Each year, pre-term babies need 8 million ounces of breast milk to survive. Non-profit milk banks have grown to serve the most vulnerable with 3 million ounces nationwide. For the thirteen states we serve, the Mothers' Milk Bank requires 20 new donors per day to provide for all babies in need.

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6 SIMPLE TIPS TO PREVENT SENIORS FROM FALLING



Overwhelmingly, people say that they want to stay independent and in their own home as they age. One way to ensure they can is to learn about fall risks and make changes to reduce their chances of falling. Because, while one in four older adults falls each year, there are ways to be

prepared for the changes of aging in order to prevent falls.

“The misconception is that falls are a normal part of aging, but this is untrue,” says Kathleen Cameron, senior director at the National Council on Aging’s Center for Healthy Aging. “Just because you’re getting older doesn’t mean you’ll inevitably fall at some point. There are proven ways to prevent falls, so older adults can live healthy, safely and independently.”

Every 11 seconds an older adult is seen in an emergency room for a fall-related injury, reports the National Council on Aging. To prevent falls, follow these six simple steps. For additional advice about preventing falls, visit www.ncoa.org/FallsTips.

Step 1: Find a good balance and exercise program

As you age, it’s important to maintain balance, strength and flexibility. Contact your local senior center or Area Agency on Aging for information on programs that can help you achieve these goals. Review your options, and find one that appeals to you. Better yet, join

with a friend to make it more fun and keep each other accountable.

Step 2: Talk to your health care provider

Have an open conversation with your health care provider about your fall concerns. Share your history of falls and ask for an assessment of your risk of falling again so you can come up with a plan proactively.

Step 3: Review medications with the pharmacist

Some medications have side effects that can make it more likely for you to fall. First, always take medications as prescribed. Second, make sure you know the risks and take precautions when necessary.

Step 4: Get vision and hearing checked annually

Your eyes and ears are key for keeping you safely on your feet. Getting your vision and hearing checked each year by a health care professional is important so you can update vision prescriptions and take any necessary measures to correct hearing loss.

Step 5: Secure your home

To keep your home safe you need to remove any tripping hazards like loose rugs or free cords. You should also increase lighting to improve visibility indoors and outdoors. Pay particular attention to stairs and consider installing grab bars or railings.

Step 6: Talk with family members

Falls affect all demographics and various ages. Talk with family members about your risks and concerns. Enlist their help as needed to secure your home and keep you safe.

“A few simple steps can dramatically reduce your risk for falling no matter your age,” says Cameron. “By being proactive, you can live healthy and independently for longer.”



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City of Marion
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 Holiday Prelude &
 Community Tree Lighting Celebration

Saturday, December 1st
 HMRA Prelude to Christmas 9am-1pm
 Marion Christmas Parade 4:30pm
Sponsored by the Marion Chamber of Commerce

Sunday, December 2nd
 Annual City Tree Lighting Celebration 6pm
 Marion County Courthouse
 Fireworks at Withlacoochee Park 7pm

Saturday, December 8th
 Pilot Club of Marion Bazaar 10am
 Marion County Museum Luncheon 12-2pm
 Historic Marion Christmas Tour of Homes 2-6pm
Sponsored by Marion Chamber of Commerce & the Pilot Club of Marion

Thursday, December 13th:
 Downtown Marion Merchants’ Extended Shopping Hours
 6-8pm Downtown Marion

*call the Chamber office for information/details 843-423-3561

FLORENCE BRINGS FOR COLORED GIRLS WHO HAVE CONSIDERED SUICIDE

Submitted by Triza Cox, Artistic Director of The Drama Lady Theatre Group



From left to right: Jessica Sistrunk, Shari Tingle, NaTalia McLeod, Aaliyah Broadus, and Leslie Benning

This past Sept. 15 marked the thirty-second anniversary of the Broadway premiere of Ntozake Shange's award winning play *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf*. Shange was the second African American female playwright to be produced on Broadway. (The first was Lorraine Hansberry for her 1959 production of *A Raisin in the Sun*). This play

features an ensemble of African American actresses using 20 poems and choreography to dramatize the inimical forces and beautiful challenges encountered when coming of age as African American and female.

In a 1995 New York Times article, Shange stated, "I am not a sociologist. These are writings about feelings." Therein lies the reason the play has now resonated with over three generations of African American women, women overall, and audiences across the world.



The Drama Lady Theatre Group

This play is a non-sanitized truth-telling exploration into lived experiences that range from falling in love, falling out of love, ownership domestic violence, sexual assault, infanticide and spirituality. This work evinces the human condition and turns it into high art.

With this legacy in mind, The Drama Lady Theatre Group, a professional collective of artists from the Southeast, has decided to bring a live performance of this work to the Francis Marion University Performing Arts Center. Most residents had only been exposed to this play through Tyler Perry's 2010 film version, or they traveled to major metropolitan areas such as Atlanta or New York for the production. Now the production is coming to us. Moreover, according to Samuel French's current listing, The Drama Lady Theatre Group's production is the only Fall 2018 production in the entire Southeastern United States.

The cast includes (in alphabetical order) Leslie Benning, Aaliyah Broadus, NaTalia McLeod, Jessica Sistrunk and Shari Tingle under the direction of Triza Cox. Sistrunk remarked on their debut by saying, "This is such an incredible opportunity for us as Black artists and female artists. It is also important to the community: THESE STORIES NEED TO BE TOLD."

Tickets for the Saturday, Nov. 17, 7p.m. production of *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf* are on sale through the Francis Marion Performing Arts Center Box Office via telephone at 843-661-4444 or online at www.fmupac.org/tickets. Be sure to ask about group ticket sales.

This project is made possible through funding from the Florence Regional Arts Alliance's Quarterly Grants Program, which is funded in part by a generous award from the South Carolina Arts Commission and the John and Susan Bennett Memorial Arts Fund of the Coastal Community Foundation of SC and due to the local support of Honda of South Carolina.

For more information about The Drama Lady Theatre Group visit www.thedramaladytheatregroup.com.

Stevens, Andrea. "For Colored Girls' May Be for the Ages" *The New York Times*. 3 Sept. 1995. Page 2002005. Web. 29 August 2018.



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GO NUTS AT THE 15TH ANNUAL SC PECAN FESTIVAL

Submitted by the SC Pecan Festival



SATURDAY NOVEMBER 3
LET'S GO NUTS! 10 AM - 7 PM
DOWNTOWN FLORENCE

SOUTH CAROLINA
PECAN FESTIVAL

FLORENCE DOWNTOWN.COM

It's that time again, time to GO NUTS at the 15th Annual South Carolina Pecan Festival. This year, the stage is set to be our biggest year to date with new attractions, our biggest line-up of entertainment ever, and the return of some old favorites. It all takes place in historic



Downtown Florence, which has seen tremendous growth since the festival's inception in 2003. What started as a single-block, single-stage community event has grown into one of the most time honored and anticipated festivals in South Carolina. The festival was also named

the best fall festival in South Carolina by Travel + Leisure Online in 2017.

This family-friendly event kicks off on Saturday, Nov. 3, and will feature eight stages of live entertainment, amusements, rides, a free Kids Fun Zone, pecan cook-off, classic car and truck show, antique tractor show and pony rides, Bike Like a Nut half century and century bike rides, Run Like a Nut 5K/10K/Half Marathon (certified by USATF), over 250 food and craft vendors (all food vendors have at least one item on their menu with pecans), the Pecan Pub, and more! Back by popular demand this year is the Chalk-it-up sidewalk chalk contest, and this year, we welcome international live muralist, ARCY! To Downtown Florence to create a large-scale masterpiece in real time during the festival.



Yummies

We invite locals and visitors to spend the day with us at the 15th Annual SC Pecan Festival and check out our fantastic line-up of entertainers this year. With eight stages, this year's festival truly has something for everyone from gospel, blues, bluegrass, jazz, and our community dance stage, to beach music, Motown, and rock and roll. You don't want to miss our headline act, Blood Sweat, and Tears, performing live on the Sharonview Federal Credit Union Main Stage at Irby and Baroody Streets starting at 5:30 p.m.



Is your pecan-infused dish the best in town? Do you want a chance at winning great

prizes? Enter our annual Pecan Cook-off and show us what you've got. Fill out the registration form (available online at www.scepecanfestival.com) and bring your recipe and best dish using pecan to the 100 Block of S. Dargan Street in front of Restaurant Row at 10:15 a.m. to compete for the \$250 Best Overall Award! Our judges this year are community leaders from all over the Pee Dee, who are anxious to try your best pecan dishes.

Looking to indulge in all things pecan? All of our food vendors this year will have at least one item containing the South's favorite nut on their menu this year, so you are guaranteed to find pecans anywhere you go. Pick up your bagged and covered pecans, pies, pecan treats, and more from the Young's Pecan booth or at any one of the official Pecan Festival booths. Don't forget your camera—we're debuting the official 20 ft. tall Pecan Festival pecan this year at the corner of Evans and Irby Streets.

If that wasn't enough, don't forget about our FREE Kids Fun Zone located on the lawn of the FMU Performing Arts Center (S. Dargan Street). Check out the Kids Zone Stage featuring live entertainment, inflatables, roaming characters, balloon sculpting, petting zoo, a bicycle giveaway, storytelling, and the Kids Fun Zone feature entertainers,



Car Show

Circus Stella, who appeared on America's Got Talent. We've even got something for the pre-teens too with our STE(A)M ZONE powered by Honda Mfg of South Carolina featuring science, engineering, and robotics demonstrations, STEM career professionals, the National Guard, and ScienceSouth on Wheels.

Don't go nuts looking for parking at this year's festival. Hop on the WBTW Park + Ride shuttle, picking up at four different off-site locations throughout Florence and delivering visitors to the festival grounds. For more information, including pick-up locations, visit our website. The Park + Ride shuttle is FREE and will run from 9:30 a.m. with its first pickup and will leave the festival for the final time at 8:30 p.m. Pick-up/drop-off will be available every 20 minutes.

The South Carolina Pecan Festival is one of the largest events held annually in Florence, attracting over 50,000 people each year. Go nuts with us this year and enjoy great food, fellowship, family fun and, of course, PECANS. For more information and a festival map, visit our website, www.scepecanfestival.com and find us on Facebook for updates and features leading up to festival day

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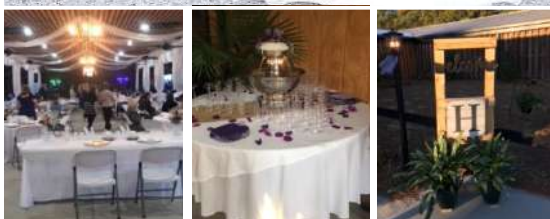
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WANT BETTER WORKPLACE RESULTS?



From standing desks and team-building events to onsite services and remote work opportunities, companies have adapted over the years to adopt new solutions that will grow their company, improve employee retention and increase productivity.

While all of these initiatives have their benefits, a strategy expert points out many companies are missing one key solution--an opportunity that exists all around them, the chance to enjoy the fresh air taking their work outside

With so many design trends to focus on, the one that almost always gets overlooked is utilizing the outdoors to work and collaborate, adding that the benefits of outdoor work extend beyond physical wellness. There are several benefits to a person's total well-being as well, including the following.

* **Improved focus.** Yes, we'd all love to believe that we can commit to eight solid hours of work every single day, but the truth is, it doesn't happen and in many cases that productivity slips as the day goes on. Working outside, however, has been shown to improve workplace focus and can restore cognitive and physical energy to dive back into a project.

* **Take an eye break.** Too much screen time isn't solely an issue for teenagers. Adults can face this challenge as well, especially those who focus on a computer screen as part of their job every single day. However, taking a break outside or working outside allows for a respite from the constant screen time. Take a moment to look away from the screen and toward a tree or bush in the distance, and it will provide just the break your eyes need.

* **Relax your brain.** Work can be stressful but spending time outdoors - whether at work or not - has been shown to release certain chemicals in the brain like Gamma-Amino Butyric Acid that work to calm your mind. So, if a certain project is giving you difficulty, taking it outside can help you tackle it in a more rational, calm way.

* **Increase and harness creativity.** Creativity and innovation are critical objectives that many companies are racing to better understand and realize in order to lead their markets and industries. For these elements to flourish, work space should protect its employee's ability to focus, collaborate effectively and support the ideal creative rhythms within an organization. Spending time outdoors allows the higher brain centers to be accessed, resulting in increased concentration, improved memory, greater creativity and productivity, and reduced mental fatigue. Work is too often done within the constraints of four walls, and stepping outside of that literal and figurative box can create unique settings for inspiration and creativity.

* **Better for the team.** The natural social tendencies of working outside have been shown to increase team engagement as team members no longer feel confined to boring meeting rooms or that they must be quiet in their office space. Walking meetings have also been shown to support more effective team collaboration by eliminating smartphone and other distractions during the meeting. In fact, research from Stanford University shows a person's creative output increases by 60 percent when they walk.





"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" - Jeremiah 29:11



Mark your calendars for November 17th 2018 to attend the Swamp Fox Highland Games and Celtic Festival! Our event will be held at the Columns Plantation from 9am-5pm. Vendors, athletes, and spectators from all over the East Coast will be coming together for a full immersion into the Celtic culture. This is a family friendly event for people of all abilities. Our kids glen will have activities for typical and special needs children to enjoy. This is a charity event benefiting Heaven's Hope Inc. Join us in the adventure to pioneer the first medically fragile children's home in our state. Purchase tickets in advance from our website www.swampfoxgames.com. We look forward to seeing you and your family at our first annual Swamp Fox Highland Games and Celtic Festival!



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DOWNTOWN FLORENCE MILLENNIALS COMMITTEE

Submitted by Florence Millennials Committee



Downtown Development is changing the scenery of Florence and also the lives of its younger citizens. Realizing that “millennials” (those currently ages 22 to 36) make up a large percentage of the area’s population and by 2020 will represent over 50 percent of the workforce. The downtown development office decided that it needed to solicit input from this group to have them help shape the future of downtown. The Downtown Development Office released a social media blast advising of the newly formed Millennials Advisory Committee and asking for volunteers to serve of the committee. After the media blast was released, the Downtown Development office received 90 applications in two days. The candidates ranged from HR professionals to college students with a mixture of different income levels, races and ethnicities. From the applications, 20 participants were selected to serve on the committee. The Committee celebrates diversity, and the participants represent a cross section of Florence.

The Committee has met multiple times and has participated in focus group style sessions regarding their needs and wants. Because millennials tend to favor electronic communication, the meetings utilized PowerPoint presentations that allowed the participants to answer questions and provide information using texting. As they texted their responses the results instantly appear on the PowerPoint

presentation for all to see.

Most recently the committee was given the opportunity to create a downtown event. Brainstorming sessions resulted in the decision to present two outdoor movies on Saturday, October 27 centered around Halloween. One movie will be Hotel Transylvania, which is family friendly and will be shown at the outdoor amphitheatre at the FMU Performing Arts Center at 7 p.m. The second movie will be Rocky Horror Picture Show and will be restricted to those 17 and older. The showing will begin at 10 p.m.

MILLENNIALS

Redefine Work-Life Balance

- In an average month, one in four (24%) business travelers Millennials take an overnight business trip at least once per week.
- Among business travelers, Millennials are most likely to add on extra days to their business trip for leisure travel.
- Millennials cite experiencing new things as the best benefit of business travel (44%).
- The majority of Millennials (65%) said discovering a new city is the number one motivator to extend a business trip.

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“FLORENCE’S FIRST INCLUSIVE PLAYGROUND – BK’S PLACE TO OPEN”

Submitted by Darlene Buchanan, Recreation Manager, City of Florence



In April of 2017, an article in Diversity Works announcing an inclusive playground to be built in Florence was published. Since that time, the project has blossomed into the completion of Phase I and the planned addition of Phase II for the playground located on the Barnes Street Recreation Campus at 513 Barnes Street in Florence. I Play Florence (IPF), an organization formed to support the development of areas of play for children of all abilities, and the City of Florence joined forces after IPF received a grant of \$65,000 from the Long Leaf Fund through the Foundation of the Carolinas in Charlotte, North Carolina. The grant was matched by city-funding and the playground concept began to move forward. Today, Phase I boasts the city’s first park with the latest soft surface material, a rubber pour-in-place padding, making it an ideal spot for children of all levels of ability.

Phase I of the playground features specially designed swings, ramps and easy-access play pieces that make it a playground where all children are included and can experience higher levels of play than in other existing facilities. Recently, IPF requested to name the park, “BK’s Playground,” after Brian Kelley, the CEO and president of the Pee Dee Electric Cooperative who passed away in 2017 at the age of 42. Brian was an energetic member of the IPF Board and had worked diligently to make the playground a reality. The Parks and Beautification Commission approved and the Florence City Council supported this naming at their respective September meetings. Also during the September council session, Erika Chapman, president of the IPF organization presented updates of not only the naming of the playground but of the future plans for inclusive play for Florence’s children.

As children enjoy Phase I of the playground, the project is transitioning into Phase II. For this next portion, The IPF group selected additional play pieces and other park amenities that were made possible by a second grant from the Long Leaf Fund in the amount of \$75,000. The City of Florence also contributed another \$120,000 towards the project. Phase II will complete the park and includes sidewalks, parking, fencing, street resurfacing, seating, drinking fountain, and covered picnic space for park-goers. The installation of the additional equipment should be completed by the end of the year.

As efforts for the first ever inclusive playground for Florence were being finalized, an unexpected yet exciting opportunity presented itself to IPF. An offer was extended from Shane’s Inspiration to provide a playground that would exceed the footprint of the combined phases of the Barnes Street Campus site. An international organization located in Los Angeles, California, Shane’s Inspiration, was seeking to develop

a site on the east coast. The group partners with communities to educate and promote public awareness of inclusivity. They develop and design playgrounds in cooperation with Landscape Structures, Inc. After further research

and a visit to the Landscape Structures, Inc. manufacturing plant in Delano, Minnesota, board members of IPF came back enthused about what such a playground could mean to Florence. Collectively, Shane’s Inspiration and Landscape Structures, Inc. have successfully partnered on dozens of projects, not only in the United States but also throughout the world. They have more than 65 completed projects with playgrounds in the United States, Mexico, Russia, Israel and Ecuador to name a few. There are another 75 or more in the developmental phase. IPF was certain they wanted to pursue this opportunity and needed only to find a location and a partner. Once again they turned to the City of Florence. With approval and support of the City of Florence Parks and Beautification Commission and the City Council, Timrod Park was selected as the best site for the new project. Timrod Park seemed a natural fit as it was more centrally located and is already one of Florence’s busiest parks. Plans for the new playground are optimistically high. IPF has set its sites on a facility that will cost approximately \$1 million. The group will work exclusively with Shane’s Inspiration to raise the funds for the proposed project. In the coming weeks, representatives from Shane’s Inspiration will travel to Florence to begin training local IPF board members and volunteers on fundraising techniques that have proven successful in other communities. If the park is built in Florence, it will become the first Shane’s Inspiration project in the southeastern United States.

With one inclusive site nearing completion and another one on the horizon, Florence will not only meet the needs for inclusive play, it will become visibly recognized as a community that truly cares about the quality of life it provides for its citizens. Perhaps Erika Chapman, president and founder of IPF said it best, “Traveling to another city just to play was unacceptable. As a city, we could do better than this!”



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER TO HEADLINE FMU FESTIVAL

Submitted by FMU



Celeste Ng

Author Celeste Ng, twice the author of a New York Times bestseller for her novels *Everything I never Told You* and *Little Fires Everywhere*, is the headliner for the 12th annual Pee Dee Fiction and Poetry Festival at Francis Marion University.

The annual two-day festival will be held on campus Nov. 8-9. It features panel discussions and book signings by the authors. It is free and open to the public. Ng is a regular on literary “best of” lists and is an active writer outside of her novels.

She’s had fiction and essays appear in *The New York Times*, *One Story*, *The Guardian* and *TriQuarterly*, among others.

Other authors appearing at the festival include Adrian Matejka, Margaret Wilkerson Sexton and Kristin Robertson.

Poet Adrian Matejka has become renowned for his works *The Devil’s Garden*; *Mixology*; and *The Big Smoke*, which was a finalist for the 2013 National Book Award and the 2014 Pulitzer Prize, and won the theAnisfield-Wolf Book Award.

Margaret Wilkerson Sexton debuted into the world of literature with *A Kind of Freedom: A Novel* and has followed up with work published in *The New York Times Book Review*, *Oprah.com*, *Lenny Letter*, *The Massachusetts Review*, *Grey Sparrow Journal* and other publications.

Kristen Robertson is an acclaimed poet known most for her works that have appeared in *Harvard Review*, *Indiana Review*, *TriQuarterly*, *Third Coast*, and *Verse Daily*, among other journals. She’s also the author of the Alice James Award-winning *Surgical Wing*.

This year’s festival will begin with a panel discussion featuring



Ng and Matejka, followed by two full days of readings, colloquiums, book signings and interactive activities.

The festival also plays an integral role in the fall academic year at FMU. Works by the participating authors are taught in select classes. Students in those classes, and

others, have an opportunity to meet with the authors in special workshops and discussion groups.

For more information on the festival, visit peedeefiction.org.



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