

DIVERSITYWORKS

OCTOBER 2019 VOLUME 9 ISSUE 4

"For All of Us"



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PG. 8

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MISSION AND VISION

OUR MISSION

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

OUR VISION

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

Spanish Version

Translated by: Yadira Santiago, MA

NUESTRA MISIÓN

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

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

NUESTRA VISIÓN

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

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FROM THE EDITOR'S HEART

MAKE YOUR WISHES COME TRUE



*Dawn "D.A." Goodwin
Editor*

Diversity Works Magazine© is a year older—age eight to be exact. So, with this issue, I invite you to blow out the rainbow-colored imaginary candles (no tricks), and make a wish for every single thing your heart desires.

Since we're only getting older—and better, I might add—let's go ahead and let the petty disagreements go. It's beyond time to embrace the ones we love, even when we'd rather win an argument. So today, I invite you to be the one who steps it up and handles negative situations differently. I don't know about you, but I don't want to miss out on "my blessings," as I've heard a dear friend say. Finally let those silly grudges go. Besides, people are passing away, left and right, and no one knows if that last petty spat consisted of the final words to ever be spoken to that loved one. Let's all wish for peace and vow to create it in our lives.

Now, focus on living more purposefully, even if you have to first arise from the pitfalls to do so. That's exactly what a former police officer did, and he's here to tell you about the "SMOKE" in his testimony. He experienced a resurgence of change in his life, and you can do the same.

As we wish for change, leave those eyes open to see about change in our area. Ruiz Foods takes the cover story and shares how its founders believe that children are the future and, therefore, the organization provides opportunities that inspire hope and change in children's lives. You also don't want to miss how area youth were recently blessed to hear "Golden" nuggets from a winner of BET's Sunday Best. When Geoffrey Golden visited a local church, he inspired the youth by teaching them all about love. The young people at the conference loved the positive message so much that they want Golden to return soon.

In your own life, are you wishing for more positivity? You can have it. How about extending an olive branch today? Get to know someone who could add positivity to your world. We give you tips for stress-free outdoor entertaining that your guests will surely love. And why not step out and enjoy events in the area? Downtown Florence always has something going on, for instance, like the upcoming Pecan Festival. Then HopeHealth's Golf Classic is coming too. My alma mater, Francis Marion University, celebrates its 50th year with several festivities, which comes at the perfect time since the school was just recognized as a Great College to Work For. In other education-related stories, we hear from FDTC, HGTC, Clafin University, Florence One, and other schools, some of which are proud to announce various accomplishments of their own.

Are you hoping to accomplish financial goals? You can do that too when you learn our retirement tips and find out how to teach your children about saving money. And imagine saving money on that expensive foreign car everyone advised you not to buy because of the vehicle repair costs. You'll be happy to find out about the only mobile Euro-foreign car repair service in the Pee Dee that goes to wherever vehicles break down to do on-site repairs. Also, in this

issue, New York Life educates you on valuing and re-valuing your business, and Dr. John D'Ambrosio, CEO of the Better Business Bureau (BBB) of Coastal Carolina, warns you about a scam that you might not have ever seen coming. We must all join together with our family members to fight against these scammers.

On another note, join with us this issue as we acknowledge National Disability Awareness Month. We celebrate with workers, like Aaron, Demetrius and Kathy who have not allowed a disability to hold them back from becoming productive members of the community. In addition, we thank organizations like the Florence and Darlington County Boards of Disabilities and others for getting these individuals job ready and for partnering with local businesses like the Salvation Army to help them successfully enter into the workplace.

Now, back to you before all the candles are blown out. Are you wishing for a better job or even volunteer opportunities to give back? There are individuals who work to decrease employment gaps in the community. One such person you'll meet in this issue is Alphonso Bradley, the Marlboro County Career Technology Education (CTE) director and Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) district coordinator. You'll also meet the volunteer coordinator for Harvest Hope who helps others see their greatness within.

A part of being great is having better health. One way to get it is by reading how to be healthier mentally and learning how to help others with mental health illnesses. For instance, Dr. Will Hunter of HopeHealth teaches us which words to avoid when dealing with someone with suicidal thoughts or behaviors in order to help those in pain. In this issue, you'll learn how to help fight loneliness by practicing mindfulness. In other health-related news, learn why you might be feeling so full. Dr. Polsky from MUSC discusses how diabetes could be one of the causes. You'll be glad to hear about a new prediabetes assessment that puts you in the know so you can address your health needs and celebrate better health.

We also triumph over stomach and breast cancer, bullying and domestic violence. Pay attention to why one stomach cancer survivor gives glory to God, and then listen to a woman who gives a voice to the community's vulnerable while a former victim of abuse discusses New Beginnings.

Read about the homeless ministry that offers second chances and leaves no man behind, and then check out the stories of individuals who selflessly give of themselves to others, including Hanna Easler, Pamela Tedder and others. We do this in recognition of National Family Caregivers Month, and for National Adoption Month, we meet the Robinsons and the Peeds, who knew that the blessings they received would all come in God's timing.

Now that those candles are out, starting today, do your best to be a blessing to others. Embrace positivity, educate yourself on matters of importance, and take the opportunity to do better for yourself and everyone around you. In time, you'll find that you are not only a blessing, but you will also be blessed in return.

Thank you, once again, for faithfully tuning in to another publication of Diversity Works Magazine©. Enjoy!

You can reach me via email at admin@youreditingpro.net, or follow my author page on Facebook: [@authordagoodwin](https://www.facebook.com/authorDAGoodwin). I would love to hear from you!

WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN TO BE AN ALLY?

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



Dr. Nika White

GREENVILLE-Instagram posts. Facebook stories. LinkedIn updates. We see a lot of #Ally posts these days. But what do the words "being an ally" really mean?

What is being an "ally"?

A lot of people will consider or call themselves an ally today in the pursuit of D&I and the world in general. I believe we need to take a step back and help people to understand the true definition of allyship. What does "being an ally" really look like if you're delivering? Allyship is a process, just like "inclusion" is a process.

I like to define allyship as a process where you are building relationships upon trust, consistency, and accountability with those marginalized identities you seek to support and empower.

If you're a true ally, you're not just someone who has the sentiment of "I believe that equality, justice, dignity and respect should be provided to this group of people or identity..." **But you stand in solidarity with those marginalized people.**

And that simple shift looks quite different and provides a much greater impact.

I'm also of the persuasion that the people you are being an ally for should be the ones giving you the label. It doesn't work to just say, "I am an ally," but your actions and impact must make those groups say, "Yes, that person IS an ally."

We want to see more actual allyship in this world versus performative allyship (or Ally Theater), which is "talking the talk of allyship" but not actually "walking the walk."

How to be more intentional as an ally:

I'm not trying to minimize or judge the importance of allies. They are so important and appreciated, but it's the way that an ally operates that is vital. As an ally, what you're really doing is acting FOR others in pursuit of helping to end whatever type of oppression exists. People do that sometimes by educating others, being a voice for others, being a sponsor for others, and being a mentor for others.

As an ally, you are leveraging your power, influence and privilege to be able to help someone else overcome some of the hurdles or barriers that exist because of their situation or oppression (whatever that may mean in their unique circumstance).

Here are a few ways to be more intentional about the work of allyship:

1) Seek out marginalized voices and perspectives to gain a better cultural competence.



By truly learning more about different cultures and experiences, this can lead people to take inventory of their lives and see how they can potentially change the situation for someone else.

2) Don't just talk the work. Do the work.

Again, no performative allyship, but real allyship. A step in the right direction is to simply be proactive and intentional in regards to actively learning the experience of other people's lives.

3) Confront racism/bigotry, and do it with a high-level of intolerance.

True allyship is not being wishy-washy. It's being really clear about where you sit. An important point—so many people are fearful of being an ally because they see it as a risk to their image, and they may lose some supporters of their own, but again this is about a work of solidarity.

4) As a community, or business, have a high compass for social consciousness. A lot of organizations of influence should continue to speak out about inequities and injustices. When you have a large volume of those high-level brands and leaders that speak out against injustice, it carries influence.

5) Give up time and money to support those organizations and nonprofits that do this work. Organizations that have a position of financial capital and can provide for different communities should give up time and money to support those organizations and nonprofits who don't have as deep of a well to do their work effectively.

6) Be vocal and call out inequities and poor behavior. As Isaac Sabat, assistant professor of organizational psychology at Texas A&M University, states at CNN, "Research shows that confronting bad behavior in the moment — responding to someone's insensitive remark, say, or calling attention to the lack of representation in the room — can be more effective when it comes from an ally."

7) Do the internal allyship work, not just external. This one is so important. Many people and brands do an "external show" of allyship work without putting in the hard internal work. You need to take time to examine your internal policies and cultures to ensure that they are completely supported and committed to driving out inequities. The natural intricacies of business and bureaucracy can make internal allyship and D&I trickier to implement, so you must make a strong, conscious effort to do the work.

Don't do Performative Allyship - walk the talk:

Here's a simple example of a community "walking the talk." Last week, a colleague of mine in Arizona saw a sign (below) and emailed it to me. It was a giant interstate sign on US84 heading into town. I don't know much of ins-and-outs of the community's work, but with this sign, they are definitely "hanging it out there" for the world to see.

I actually liked the sentiment of it. I know it's just a sign, and whether it's in practice or not, this is a good thought because to get to that sign, they have to do the mental process of knowing that people are going to scrutinize or call them out and hold them accountable. They had to have done some internal work.

The real test will be to see if they're delivering upon it. Typically, when organizations/businesses put it out there, they know they'll be held to scrutiny.

To me, part of the strategy behind something like this is to not only communicate what you strive for, but to give people license to hold you accountable to it. So you can't just perform, but you have to "live it." And I don't think people are too willing to do that unless they are ready to actually be held accountable.

How can you be more intentional as an ally?

With that simple sign, it's sending a very intentional message that you are a community/organization that is continuously practicing that role as an ally and doing it in a well-informed way.

Solidarity means you are being active in helping to facilitate a change. I think that's the important difference between performative allyship and true allyship.

I personally like to challenge people. If you consider yourself an ally, how can you stand in solidarity for those individuals? What can you do to amplify both your internal and external work to support those marginalized voices and communities?

HARTSVILLE CHAMBER TO HOST SYMPOSIUM

Submitted by Murphy Monk, President



WLS Committee ready for participants to arrive

HARTSVILLE—On Nov. 1 the Greater Hartsville Chamber of Commerce will host its second annual Women’s Leadership Symposium, presented by Sonoco. The symposium, held at the Harris E. and Louis H. DeLoach Center, will be from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature exciting breakout sessions, an informative panel discussion, several award presentations and lunch. Lunch will be catered by Bizzell’s Food and Spirits.

This year’s theme is “Know Your Worth.” Breakout sessions will address issues relating to financial wellness, self-care, leadership, and more. Session topics include:

- 1A: Grow Your Worth

Budgeting 101: How to create a feasible budget for your life—and how to live it. Tips and tricks on saving and getting smart with your money.

- 1B: Share Your Worth

Mentorship 101: How to become or find a mentor—both professionally and personally. Advice on surrounding yourself with a team of strong women while empowering others.

- 2A: “No” Your Worth

Decision Making 101: How to say “no.” Finding joy and taking pride in saying “no” while waiting for the “best yes.”

- 2B: Enhance Your Worth

Self-Care 101: How to take care of yourself, wholly. Enhancing your self-worth through love and respect for your mind, body and soul

We have also added in a group session to this year’s agenda. This session will be led by Jamie Kelly, senior partner of The Elevate Consultants. This session is named “Launch Your Worth” and will address issues relating to mapping out your goals and utilizing your skills to make moves toward launching professional and self-development.

This year, the Women’s Leadership Symposium will be welcoming several guests. Our keynote speaker, and recipient of the 2019 Chrysalis Award, will be Lou Kennedy. Kennedy is the CEO of Nephron Pharmaceuticals. Also, we will present the 2019 Woman of Achievement award to this year’s recipient, Brenda Cranford, at this event. Cranford is the owner of Brenda Cranford School of Dance, located in Hartsville. Lastly, the chamber is thrilled to announce the addition of a special guest. Miss South Carolina, Morgan Nichols, will be in attendance at this year’s event. Nichols’ platform promotes STEM fields to students. We are excited to welcome all of our guests to this event.

We hope you will join us for this amazing event. Tickets are \$75 and can be purchased on our website: www.hartsvillechamber.org. For more information on tickets or sponsorships, please call the chamber at 843-332-6401. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity for the hardworking women in your organization. This is an amazing opportunity for personal growth and professional development. This event will be a day-long, information packed event that will ensure attendees leave with attainable action items.



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Ideal Funeral Parlor, Inc. Celebrated 80 Years of Dedicated Service to the Pee Dee. Ideal Funeral Parlor is one of the oldest businesses in the Pee Dee. Eighty years of continued service is a blessing. Ideal feels its longevity comes from being humble, dedicated and committed to the people they serve.

On Aug. 17 the staff and families of Ideal Funeral home held a celebration to commemorate its 80 years of service to the Pee Dee. The staff provided a good old fashion fish fry with community entertainment for the event. Over 500 people came to show their appreciation. The celebration was a tribute and thank you to the community. Ideal recognizes that they would not be where they are today without the support of their community.

The funeral home also introduced its Historic African-American Obituary Database. Ideal has developed a searchable database of obituary programs 1960 -2019. This database will be a great resource for African-American families in the Pee Dee looking to research their family tree.



Douglas Hawkins, Manager, and William Johnson, Board Chair (Photo Credit: Morning News)

Ideal Funeral Parlor was established in 1939. The original partners were Rev. W. S. Guiles, Rev. Arthur James, Rev. and Willie A. Johnson, Flander Singleton, Jasper Singleton. Many of the families of the original founders are still involved with Ideal Funeral Parlor. Rev. W. A. Johnson was named the manager and

remained in that position until his death in 1961. The first building was located at 300 Mullins Street, Florence.

In 1968, the physical location moved to 1005 E. Cheves Street, Florence. In 1996, R. Douglas Hawkins was named general manager. In 2002, Ideal Funeral Parlor moved into our present facility at 106 E. Darlington Street, Florence.



Council Woman Teresa Ervin presents Douglas Hawkins, Ideal Funeral Parlor with a proclamation from the city of Florence. Photo Credit: Pam Personal Touch Photography & Video

Upon the death of Rev. W. A. Johnson, Rufus Hawkins was named the manager. During his tenure, the business continued to grow and prosper. In 1986, Ideal Funeral Parlor incorporated with Rev. Wescott Johnson as president. Upon his death, Evelyn Guile served as a resident of the board. In 2018, William Johnson was elected chairman of the board. Current board members include Johnny Holmes, Leo James and Taft Guile.

“Today, after 80 years of excellence in service to our community, we are honored to continue the legacy started by a group of African-American businessmen who had vision and foresight to build Ideal Funeral Parlor,” Douglas Hawkins stated. “We are proud of our history and heritage of the institution. We stand on some strong shoulders. We could not be here today without the support of the communities throughout the Pee Dee. Today, we are committed to always serve families with the same professionalism, courtesy, and respect. We are grateful to God for the opportunity to serve and be a part of this community. This celebration was not for us. It was a thank you to our community that we are proud to serve.”

Be Prepared Be Aware Be Ready

Be Prepared
Be Aware
Be Ready

"If we can't reach you, we can't notify you."

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

“ If we can't reach you, we can't notify you.”

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Emergency Notification System

Get emergency notifications from Florence County Emergency Management by phone, text, and email.

Receive alerts about emergencies and other important community news by signing up for our public alert and warning system. This system allows us to provide you with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods. You will receive time-sensitive messages wherever you specify, such as your home, mobile or business phones, email, text messages or a phone application. You pick where; you pick how.

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Florence County Emergency Management

1221 Justice Way P.O. Box 278

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Main Office Telephone: 843-665-7255

www.fcemd.org



Pee Dee Coalition- Holly Powell, Legacy Project assistant; Ellen Hamilton, Pee Dee Coalition executive director; Jay Kirby, VP of Public Affairs; Freda Cox, Williamsburg County coordinator/advocate; Rob Ardis, SEC President and CEO; Ronald Carter, manager of Economic Development and Government Relations

KINGSTREE— Santee Electric was proud to share the success of the past year by making sizable donations to three local charities recently. To make these donations even greater, each amount has been doubled by grants through CoBank Cooperative.

CoBank Cooperative is a national cooperative bank with a Sharing Success grant program. SEC has participated in the ongoing grant process for eight consecutive years. This year Santee Electric Cooperative submitted grants for three charities in its service area: the Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Assault Williamsburg County Satellite Crisis Center, A Second Chance Animal Shelter and Florence County Disabilities.

The Pee Dee Coalition will use the gift of \$2,500 plus the matching donation from CoBank to help establish a permanent space for the provision of services to the residents of Williamsburg County. The Pee Dee Coalition is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to the reduction of sexual assault, family violence and child abuse and to the needs of its victims. The space at #2 Courthouse Square in Kingstree has been acquired and is being renovated by the Pee Dee Coalition for this purpose.

Santee Electric was able to give \$1,500 in addition to CoBank's matching donation to A Second Chance Animal Shelter, formally known as Animal Shelter of Clarendon County. This shelter is a no-kill, non-profit organization. A Second Chance Animal Shelter works hard to eliminate the problem of unwanted animals in Clarendon County through its sheltering, adoption, low-cost spay/neuter and rescue programs. This shelter receives no state or federal government funding but, instead, relies on individual and business donations, proceeds from fundraisers and profits from A Second Chance Thrift Store.

Finally, once the two checks from SEC and CoBank were combined, a total donation of \$2,000 was given to Florence Disabilities. This gift will go towards the delivery of services for people with disabilities. Florence County Disabilities works to touch people's lives by providing opportunities such as summer camps, talent contests, holiday meals, uniforms for Special Olympic athletes and other activities and programs.

"Santee Electric Co-op has always come through for us with their continual support. They have held donation drives, assisted us in promoting the Florence County Disabilities Foundation, as well as making monetary contributions. They have our heartfelt appreciation for all they have done. It is a fantastic group of people making a big



A Second Chance Animal Shelter - Ericka Timmons; Leslie Billups; Jessica Coleman; Paige Handy; Brittany Atkinson; Jay Kirby, VP of Public Affairs; Brandi Haley; Derick Cooper; Jackson Padgett, shelter director; and Rob Ardis, SEC President and CEO



Florence Disabilities - Stephen Fincher, Florence Disabilities consumer and assistant to the truck driver; Anne Carpenter, Foundation director; Dr. Sharon Askins, Florence Disabilities Board; Jay Kirby, VP of Public Affairs; Rob Ardis, SEC President and CEO; and Samuel Burgess, Florence Disabilities truck driver.

difference in the community in which they live and work," stated Anne Carpenter, Foundation director.

Santee Electric President and CEO, Rob Ardis replied, "CoBank has been an extremely valuable lending partner of Santee Electric's for many years, and this matching grant program they offer is one of the great benefits that they provide. Since SEC – like so many of the organizations to which we donate – is a not-for-profit entity, our charitable giving pool is finite ... and relatively small. A generous organization like CoBank helps those limited resources go that much further."

Santee Electric is an electric cooperative and operates by the 7 Cooperative Principals. Principal #7 is Concern for Community. It is this concern for community that prompted the co-op to give back to the charities that work so hard in the communities in which it serves.

IMPROVING OUR SYSTEM



Ronald Carter

KINGSTREE-Santee Electric Cooperative ("SEC") provides unparalleled service to our members through a network of business professionals, engineers and linemen that are committed to delivering reliable electricity at the lowest possible cost. As a member-owned cooperative, we are invested in growing our communities. Part of that is making sure that our members have employment opportunities within a reasonable distance from their homes. According to the SC Power Team, our statewide economic development affiliate, our large commercial and

industrial members create employment for around 6,580 people. As the regional population increases, we need more job opportunities for our members. To that end, SEC is diligently working with our local, regional and statewide partners to bring more businesses to the area.

As an electric distribution company, the cost of electricity that we purchase wholesale largely depends on the load factor of our overall system. In general, manufacturing facilities and other large commercial operations use a lot of electricity and have good load factors due to their hours of operation and consumption profile. Having more of these operations on our system creates jobs for our members and increases the load factor of the overall system. Lower cost electricity for SEC means lower cost electricity for our members; it is a win-win.

Led by Vice President Jay Kirby, an established professional with more than 30 years' experience and a background in energy efficiency programs, government relations and community relations, the new public affairs department at SEC is tasked with improving membership communications and promoting energy efficiency programs, philanthropic efforts and economic development efforts. Within the department, SEC created a position to manage existing industrial and large commercial

IMPROVING OUR SYSTEM CONT'D

accounts, manage business development activities and manage government relations. Ronald Carter joined the SEC family last year as its manager of economic development and government relations and, nearly one year later, has already brought renewed engagement and interest to our service area.

As with any kind of sales, we realized that we needed something to sell. In this case, our “product” comes in the form of industrial sites and buildings. Ronald is tasked with coordinating strategic investments and initiatives to recruit new industrial members. SEC does not use funds from member power bills to fund industrial product investments; instead, we partner with county, regional, and statewide economic development groups to leverage funds from the Power Team and utility tax credits, funds that would otherwise be paid to the state if not invested in our territory. Within the last decade, SEC secured around \$6 million of this type of funding with \$2 million of that amount secured within the last year as our efforts intensified. These funds support new and ongoing product development efforts in all four of our service counties.

In Clarendon County, we are focusing on improving the Clarendon County Industrial Park by creating a new industrial park entrance that will replace a dilapidated former gas station. SEC continues to support the acquisition and development of the I-95 Mega Site, and we are working closely with Clarendon County to recruit an industrial tenant for the vacant spec building in the industrial park.

Our newest product development venture is the 148-acre Scranton Industrial Park, which represents a partnership with NESAs, Florence County, the SC Power Team and others. The park has railroad access and proximity to the amenities of the Lake City area, including the new \$25 million workforce training center, the Continuum. While this project is currently in its due diligence and preliminary engineering phases, we have already gotten significant positive interest from prospective industries.

In Georgetown County, SEC partnered with the county to support surveying and engineering of the new Pennyroyal Industrial Park, a unique industrial asset with rail and barge access. When the county sold its speculative industrial building in Andrews to MPW Industrial Water, a great company that has already created more jobs than originally anticipated, SEC provided a significant grant to help the county get another building constructed. With both of those assets available and currently being marketed, we look forward to helping the county recruit great industrial companies.

Being headquartered in Kingstree, Williamsburg County will always be close and dear to us. The Williamsburg Cooperative Commerce Centre is a great example of what we can accomplish through partnerships. The park is home to our SEC community solar farm, a new electrical substation, two speculative industrial buildings, Embroidery Solutions and Palmetto Synthetics. The park has been successful in the past, and we see a lot of good things happening there in the future. The county is also home to other sites that we have supported including the Tri-Area Business Center near Lane.

Beyond our product development efforts, SEC maintains a robust business development effort that is focused on making sure that the future of SEC and its members is bright. Economic development is a team effort, and we are proud to contribute to the economic vitality of our service territory. We are improving system by improving our communities.



If your lights go out!

During a storm or other disaster, Santee Electric Cooperative offers several quick and easy ways to report a power outage.

mobile app:

SmartHub

- ◆ Report & Monitor Outages
- ◆ Check Your Power Usage
- ◆ Contact Customer Service & More



This app is FREE at the Apple App Store & Android Google Play Store.

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SEC & TextPower™

- ◆ Report Your Outage **OUT to 85700**
- ◆ Check Your Outage Status
- ◆ Receive Restoration Notices **All By Text**

3 Ways to Register:
Visit www.santee.org, call 1.800.922.1604 to speak with a customer service representative, or text SECIN to 85700

SEC must have your mobile # on file prior to enrolling.

call: **1-888-239-2300**

When there is an outage, members can be sure that Santee Electric's dedicated employees work around the clock until all power is restored.



For storm safety and outage information visit www.santee.org



CITY STAFF EXPERIENCE THE SUBMARINE WAY

Submitted by Amanda Pope, CMO Administrator

“Helping the City of Florence with selecting and developing their next leaders has been tremendously gratifying. We were already familiar with the wonderful people and culture of the City leaders, but this effort has been so rewarding and allowed us to become familiar with a whole new group.”

-Deb Fortin (President - The Submarine Way a Genesis Group LLC)

The City of Florence, recognizing the importance of utilizing existing employee talent, initiated a development and training platform. The intent was to create the opportunity for lead employees in the organization to potentially grow and develop into future leadership roles. City staff worked with consultants, Deborah Cake Fortin, M.S., and John Gregory Vincent, M.B.A, in this process to identify high and moderate potentials and performers in the current organization. Once these future leaders were identified, training began to explore future growth opportunities that existed internally with current staff. Ultimately, the information gained from this exercise would assist in the development of a succession plan for the organization.

Having previously worked with John Vincent to provide management training for the city, staff was aware of the energy, enthusiasm and knowledge he brings to participants. John and his wife, Deb, had just completed their book, “Diversity and Inclusion, The Submarine Way.” In the quest to continue advancing the community and organization forward, what better place to begin the journey with this new group of potential leaders than an immersion in a study on diversity and inclusion?

How does life on a submarine relate to diversity and inclusion? This underwater vessel has a crew comprised of diverse backgrounds and strengths with a focus on one mission. The limited space afforded a crew on a submarine brings an extremely different dynamic than most individuals experience at work. There is no privacy, no opportunity

to “get away,” few amenities and a complete reliance on members of the crew. The knowledge that you are completely dependent on your crew forces a blindness to differences, clearing the focus on mission and the crew working together toward the same goal. “Outstanding people have one thing in common: An absolute sense of mission.” – Zig Ziglar

Training began with a strengths-based assessment of each individual participant. Knowing the strengths of your crew members clarifies your talent base and defines the diverse assets of the organization. Once individual strengths are identified, emphasis is placed on growth and development in these areas. This exercise brought awareness to each participant of their individual strengths while also bringing attention to how their various abilities and differences strengthened the crew. Individuals then work to create a “crew-munity,” which is enriched by individual strengths and functions as one to accomplish organizational goals.

City staff immersed themselves into “The Submarine Way,” learning how detrimental it is for a submarine crew to operate efficiently both individually and as a team. It also demonstrated the importance of diversity and inclusion to the success of the organization. Participants learned this was accomplished through effective on boarding and mentoring of new employees; a strength-based mindset; a diverse and inclusive culture; effective communication and collaboration; and commitment and focus on the mission. These city leaders were encouraged to develop leadership principles and a leadership creed and share the information they learned throughout the city organization.

Training and development is ongoing for city staff. Another group, “Emerging Leaders,” has also been formed to continue development of potential future leaders of the organization. The City will continue focusing on the City’s Mission and Core Values and investing in its employees for the betterment of the organization and the community.

City of Florence Mission Statement

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

Collaboration

Pursuing the best solution or outcome - thinking “we, not me.”

Professionalism

Demonstrating competence, proficiency, and skill, and well as honesty, integrity, and respect.

Ownership

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





 Simma Lieberman
THE INCLUSIONIST

Before you talk about hiring for culture fit, take the time, resources and energy to examine your culture as it is and then develop a vision for the future. Hire for the future culture you want, and have a plan to achieve it.

Research by Professor Lauren Rivera from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management found that interviewers often look for potential friends rather than those with the best skills. If you want to build and retain a diverse workforce that supports equity and inclusion and that will result in breakthrough products and services, stop looking for "best friends" that you can have a beer with. Stop staying stuck in comfort and stagnation with people who

look, act and think like you.

Hiring for "cultural fit," in an all white or all male and under 40 work environment means the next hires will be white, male and under 40. It means that hiring for "culture fit" in your company will perpetuate bias, racism, sexism and other forms of exclusion.

But if you're willing to transform your culture and how you hire, here are steps you can take now.

Seven Steps For Vision Fit Hiring

Real change needs to be in the mindset and culture of the organization. It's essential to measure, review and flush out opportunities for systemic bias and discrimination in your business processes. Continuously take next steps, some tiny and some huge. The whole senior leadership team needs to be involved in how they think and

what they do to promote that culture.

Here are seven steps of many that you can take to hire for the culture you want. For a longer list, email Simma@Simmalieberman.com or call 510-697-8226.

- 1- Examine your culture and the people in it
 - Does everyone look the same?
 - Are you a bunch of "tech bros" who think alike?
 - If you have a diverse workforce, what steps are you taking to nourish, support and retain people different than you?
 - Draw a prototype of a DEI culture in your organization, and compare to present day. Who is not represented? Who is missing? Those are the new people you need who can take your organization to new heights.
- 2- Find new ways to recruit, interview and onboard new employees.
- 3- Take time to develop relationships in advance of need with people different than your organization's norm. Don't rely just on the wording of your job posts (but definitely get help making them more welcoming and reflect the values of DEI.)
- 4- Revisit your definition of cultural fit. Think how well candidates will fit the DEI culture you want, not the monochrome culture you have.
- 5- Research and utilize new technologies being used to reduce bias in hiring, and know that the technology is not enough. Implement hiring practices that eliminate the bias of the recruiter and that include a diverse panel of decision makers.
- 6- Change your culture, change recruiters and stop using the term culture fit to mean your clones. Be ruthless in your self-assessment, and look for people who don't think like you or laugh at all the same jokes.
- 7- Hire the "idea" candidate who's not afraid to think differently and not the "ideal" candidate who looks and thinks like you.

R&M Sales

Helping Create Spaces You Will Love To Call Home

Specializing In Cypress, Pine, Cedar, Poplar, And Oak
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The advertisement features a collage of wood-related images. The top half shows a close-up of a wooden ceiling with a complex geometric pattern of beams. Below this, there are three smaller images: a vertical shot of wood paneling, a view of a wooden staircase with a railing, and another close-up of wood paneling. The text is overlaid on these images in a white, elegant serif font.

Francis Vazquez
General Manager,
Pharma Services,
Manati, PR

MADE WITH

CHARACTER & COMMITMENT

HOW 600 PEOPLE CAME TOGETHER TO PULL OFF THE IMPOSSIBLE.

In the wake of Hurricane María, the island of Puerto Rico was knocked off the grid. No power. No water. No food. No communications. As the General Manager of Thermo Fisher Scientific's drug manufacturing site in Manati, Puerto Rico, Francis had a seemingly insurmountable challenge ahead of him. First, he found his people and made sure they were safe. Next, he had to establish a communications system to keep clients informed of daily developments and goals – with virtually zero cellular service. Then, as more and more employees returned for work, lead their efforts to return the site to operational status, not to mention solve the endless emergencies of the day. Because no matter what they were facing, they knew that patients around the world depended on their life-saving medications. Miraculously, the facility was back online two months after the storm. It just goes to show how far you can go with commitment, teamwork, and a ton of heart.

patheon

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Find out more at thermofisher.com/patheon

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● API

● BIOLOGICS

● EARLY & LATE
PHASE DEVELOPMENT

● CLINICAL
TRIAL SOLUTIONS

● LOGISTICS
SERVICES

● COMMERCIAL
MANUFACTURING

1 OF 1 MOBILE EUROPEAN REPAIR SERVICES by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Need repairs done before you get on the road or just a maintenance check to insure a comfortable ride to your destination? Diagnosis and repairs are done on site at your location... hotels, residences, etc.

LATTA-How many times have you or someone you know been the person in the work parking lot with the car that suddenly decides it doesn't want to crank? Unfortunately, it happens way too often and to way too many of us. But thankfully, your relief is here because in July of 2018, Chris Green started Euro Mobile Auto Repair LLC, the only mobile

Euro-foreign car repair service in the Pee Dee area that goes to wherever vehicles break down and does on-site repairs.

A native of Dillon, Green has always been into cars. He began repair work focusing solely on domestic vehicles, but once he became knowledgeable about higher-end vehicles and began repairing them, he attracted more and more customers. Yet, Green said he still does work on domestic vehicles too.

Today, with the help of his fiancée, Karen Wheeler, who is in charge of stocking parts, completing orders, performing bookkeeping and maintaining inventory, Green's services make the vehicle repair business both transparent and extremely convenient for his clients. For instance, have you ever heard of a mechanic who makes himself available for his clients, no matter what day of the week it is? Well that's only part of the reason why customers love Green and Euro Mobile.

Here's more. With Euro Mobile, you can finally stop asking Siri and Google to find nearby repair shops for your vehicles, and you can cut out the inconvenience of the middleman. That means you won't

have to bum a ride while your car is getting fixed. Then you won't be paying endless car rental fees while you wait for days to first get an appointment at a repair shop, only to find that you have to wait even longer for parts to come in before mechanics can begin the repair process on your vehicle. If that sounds like too much of a hassle, then it's because it is too much.



Full vehicle diagnostics are done on site with emailed or printed forms on all vehicles. Also, inspections are done to eliminate future breakdowns.

Here's how Green's ingenious, hassle-free business works. If your vehicle breaks down at work or a store, for example, Green can fix it in the parking lot so that by the time you get off it's done. Or, if the company doesn't allow repairs in the parking lot, Green will take you to work, then go back to your house and fix your car. In

addition, he will provide towing if he is unable to fix an individual's car right away or if it can't sit in a particular area for long. Green is able to perform onsite repairs ranging from mechanical problems, break repairs, tune ups and window repairs, to water pump replacements, key programming and heating/AC work. For vehicle diagnostics, Green says he has the same software foreign car dealers have that they might charge \$110 for, just to tell you something about the car. But because this is something he loves to do and is passionate about, he said he doesn't mind showing customers a tutorial while he fixes their car. And [unlike some repair places] you'll always see an old part and a new part. Now that's the type of transparency all customers deserve when they're seeking honest, reliable repair work.

And that's exactly why Green's customers ride away from Euro Mobile Auto Repair smiling.

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GENETIC TESTING: IT COULD BE A SCAM

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



Dr. John D'Ambrosio

CONWAY-There are lots of commercials that are encouraging you to find out who you are. It may be a company that can discover unknown relatives that will fill out your family tree. Or, it might be an ad that says with a simple swab inside your cheek, you can uncover mysteries from your past or a glimpse into the future. This one little swab can reveal history, ancestors, current relatives and possible future health risks. It's appealing and easy. And, most of us plan to do it at some time

in the future.

Now, you're walking around, enjoying a fall home and garden show, an arts festival or a health fair, and there's a booth that has genetic testing available. You remember the advertisement, so you stop. But buyer beware. This could be a huge mistake.

DNA testing is becoming pretty common and when used appropriately, it can help you make informed decisions. Unfortunately, scammers have found a way to get you to willingly participate, give them your personal information and possibly even steal your money.

Across the country, BBB has been seeing an explosion of genetic testing companies pop up across the country. These companies are hiring local recruiters to go anywhere seniors may be. The scammers want to make it convenient, and so you may also see these "companies" in a grocery store or shopping center. They may come by your home and knock on your front door. They often hit retirement villages, or senior citizen facilities.

The reason that they are targeting seniors – and yes, this is a very targeted approach – is that many of these companies are scammers. They want your personal information. Mostly, they want your Medicare number.

Their representatives will inform you that they are partnering with Medicare and that Medicare Part B will pay for the DNA testing, that it's basically free for you. Because it may show you of possible future health issues, they will tell you that Medicare says this will save them (and you) money in the long run. It's a very convincing story. You just give a cheek swab and they will do the test, provide you with a detailed report and bill Medicare.

When a doctor orders DNA testing, there are certain types of things he is looking to find. His office also knows what Medicare will pay for and which tests they will not. Genetic testing is not inexpensive. While there are a few basic tests that run under \$500, most of the tests run a great deal more – into the thousands. These fraudulent companies are going to charge Medicare for every type of genetic testing possible. If Medicare refuses to pay, they start billing you for the charges. And you may never even get the results of the tests.

If this has happened to you or a loved one, there are some things to be on the lookout for. Contact Medicare, and let them know that

what happened. Remember, Medicare doesn't call you. Inform your doctors. If they want you to have genetic testing, discuss the pros and cons with them and what information will be available from those tests.

Keep your information safe. Do not give your Medicare information or your social security number out. Only do genetic testing at a facility that your doctor has sanctioned, not at places like community events, shopping

centers or other public venues.

Check your Medicare Summary Notice or Explanation of Benefits when it arrives. Look for red flags with words like "gene analysis" and "molecular pathology," which are standard words used for this type of testing.

And finally, report your concerns. If you or an elderly relative has received a cheek swabbing that wasn't ordered by your doctors, report your concerns about billing errors or fraud to your local "Senior Medicare Patrol." To locate your state Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP): Use the SMP Locator at www.smpresource.org or call 1-877-808-2468. Also, report it on www.bbb.org/scamtracker.

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



There when things go wrong.
Here to help life go right.™



SMP Warning!

Individuals promoting genetic testing of Medicare Patients through meetings and educational sessions could be using these tests to commit Medicare fraud and abuse.

Genetic Testing Scam!

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THE PEOPLE WHO CARE, ARE THE PEOPLE WHO CAN by De'Angela Haynes



Jenny Treaster

EFFINGHAM-Abraham Maslow is known for his Hierarchy of Needs Theory. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. Needs lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied before individuals can attend to needs higher up. From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards, the needs are: physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. In 1943, Maslow initially stated that individuals must satisfy

lower level deficit needs before progressing on to meet higher level growth needs. This theory and principles from this theory are used all over the world throughout Human Resources for companies, businesses and organizations.

One distinguished woman, who is making great impact within her company, is Jenny Treaster, the hiring manager for McCall Farms. She started working with McCall farms 15 months ago. She was the employee relations manager for the first eight months of employment with McCall Farms and was offered the position of hiring manager when ownership and management decided to pull out from hiring through temp services and began hiring direct.

McCall Farms rented the Legion building across the street from the plant and since April 1, it has served as our hiring center. "We take applications, set up interviews and do all of our onboarding at this location. Since April, we have added 500+ employees to McCall Farms. Working for a family-owned company that has been in this community for over 160 years is a great feeling. Ownership is here and is a part of the everyday operations," Treaster said.

In order to have a strong foundation and impact in the company,

Treaster has to have a strong foundation home. She is married to David Treaster, who has been employed at GE for the last nine years. She has three daughters: Allie (24), Emma (16), and Kennedy (7). She also has a son: David (her baby, who is 5 years old). Along with being a wife and mother, Jenny is also a grandmother with three grandchildren: Carson (4), Haisley (2) and Asher (1 month).

Treaster moved here from Massachusetts 20 years ago. Her father is Ecuadorian, and her mother is from Massachusetts. She spent her childhood years living in Ecuador, South America, and returned to the USA to complete her education. She is bilingual Spanish/English and said this has always helped her in being able to communicate efficiently with employees and also helps her recruit a diverse workforce.

In 2017, Treaster started a home business as a cake decorator. She enjoys it more as a hobby since returning to a fulltime position last year, and she has made every kind of cake imaginable, from wedding cakes to her son's four-foot dinosaur cake. She realizes that although she stays busy, she is very happy.

A great leader once said, "The people who care, are the people



Jenny displays one of her many talents: A dinosaur cake she made for her son's 4th birthday. It was all edible.

who can" (Bishop Michael A. Blue). Jenny Treaster is not only a great example of diversity being modeled, but she is also a great demonstration of leadership being displayed within diversity! She has a passion and certainly has skills to bring about such growth and expansion within this short amount of time at McCall Farms.

LABELS ARE FOR CANS;
Not People.



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



Ronald J. Jebaily

Ronald J. "Ron" Jebaily and the Jebaily Law Firm celebrated the firm's 50th anniversary and his service to the Florence community on Aug. 10 at the Waters Building on South Dargan Street in downtown Florence.

Ron Jebaily was surprised with the establishment of the Ronald J. Jebaily Endowed Scholarship at Francis Marion University in his honor. He talked about his career, his contributions to the community and the people he serves.

Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., the eldest of five sons of John and Sylvia Jebaily, he moved to Florence and hung his shingle in Florence after graduating from the University Of South Carolina School Of Law. He moved the firm to its current location on West Evans Street in 1979 to be a little closer to downtown.

Ronald J. "Ron" Jebaily has served Florence as an attorney for 50 years. Recently, a celebration was held to honor him and the Jebaily Law Firm at the Waters Building in downtown Florence.

"I had family here," he said. "I didn't know anybody in South Carolina except my family. Florence is a wonderful place. I'm glad to be here. I love the people of the Pee Dee."

At the beginning of his career, he handled a range of areas of law, but today, he concentrates mostly on workers' compensation cases.

He said your point of view depends on what you do. "I represent injured workers," he said, "because I discovered that after injured or sick children workers are the most deserving people on earth. These are people who go to work to put bread on their table, and through no fault of their own they get injured. The system is not friendly to them."

He said the system is very difficult to navigate.



George D. Jebaily

George D. Jebaily joined his brother, Ron Jebaily, in the Jebaily Law Firm 35 years ago. The firm celebrates its 50th anniversary this month.

He said he learned early in his career that just putting a check in the client's hand was not satisfying. He had to offer them an opportunity to get over the injury, particularly if that injury was life changing. "I have to give them more than money," he said. He gives them "Ron's philosophy of the practice of law."

He tells them the story of slaying the dragon, the story of the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus. Jebaily said they must slay the dragon. The signs of the dragon, he said, are pain, fear,

anger, worry and anxiety and unfulfilled desire.

Ron Jebaily said the greatest moments of his career are when people whom he has successfully represented--and he quickly added that doesn't necessarily mean a big cash pay--believe they have been dealt with fairly and justly. "They are different," he said. "Justice is what you deserve in your life, considering your circumstances. Fairness is getting the same-size slice of the pie, getting the same result as other people."

"When people feel they have been dealt with fairly and justly at the end of the case, they smile, and that smile keeps me going."

Reaching this milestone in his career and the firm's is gratifying. But in "all honesty, the only thing I had to do to earn this honor is live long enough," he said.

In addition, he is not the only lawyer in Florence who has reached this milestone of a 50-year career. Ron Jebaily said at least two others come to mind. He said the most profound changes in Florence since he started the practice a half century ago have been in the attitude of the people. He said when he first moved here, the people of Florence thought of themselves as rural people. "Today, people are coming to think of themselves as urban," he said. He said instead of going home at 5 p.m. after work, they are going downtown to have a meal, a drink and meet friends. "That is a powerful

change," he said.

He said the change is not over with. There are changes going on in our culture that are frightening to many people, changes that make some people angry, because they don't know what to do about it. He said it is here, and it is upon us. "I couldn't be happier," he said. "Personally, I believe that every person has a part to play in God's providence, and I have found mine."

After a 50-year career, what is next for Ron Jebaily? "I can stop working anytime I want, but I'd miss out on life, so I'm not going to retire as long as God gives me the health and my mind still works," he said.

His contributions to the community are numerous, as are the recognitions. He was honored by the Florence County Bar Association for Lifetime Achievement with the Ralph King Anderson Jr. Award, given annually to a member of the Florence County Bar who has contributed to "Not only the character and quality of the legal profession but to the community it serves."



Reveling of The Ronald J. Jebaily Endowed Scholarship

Ron Jebaily has served as past president of the Florence County Mental Health Association, former chair of the Florence Symphony Orchestra Board and former member of the Florence Housing Authority. He also has been an active member of the Florence Little Theatre as both an actor and director. He earned the best actor award for his most recent role in "Tuesdays with Morrie." He also won the award for roles in 2014 and 1974.

Years ago, he taught political science for two years at Francis Marion College, now FMU. He taught the First Amendment. That is just one of many of his contributions to the university.

Ron Jebaily and his wife, Suzanne, are members of St. Anthony Catholic Church in Florence.

It wasn't long after his youngest brother graduated from law school that he joined the firm. George Jebaily was a young boy when he moved to Florence with his parents. He, too, earned his law degree at the University of South Carolina. He is now managing partner and focuses on personal injury. He has been with the firm for 35 years.

"I started out in Columbia," George Jebaily said. He was representing insurance companies but decided he wanted to represent people who are in need and who have a problem. He said he liked being connected to the people, and having the opportunity to come back to Florence and work with his older brother just made the thought more attractive.

He added that coming back to the community where he grew up and loved dearly, along with working with his brother, was a great draw. "I have zero regrets," he said.

George Jebaily said the firm's success comes with many blessings. "The greatest blessing for us was our parents, who instilled in us the values of faith, compassion and doing the right things, helping people in need." He said their parents taught them that if you treat other people with dignity and respect, no matter what you do, when you look in the mirror you will never have any regrets.

Having a community that embraces them and allows them to be of service is also a great blessing. He said the task is sometimes daunting, but they take their responsibilities seriously. "Mine is personal injury and the

JEBAILY LAW FIRM CONT'D



The Jebaily Law Firm Celebrates their 50th Anniversary at the Water's Building Downtown Florence

day-to-day management of the company,” George Jebaily said.

He also has been a member of the Florence City Council since 2014, and he is passionate about downtown Florence and the work being accomplished toward revitalization. “When I moved back in 1984, downtown was in a downward spiral,” he said.

George Jebaily joined with a small group of people that recognized the deterioration had to end, and they started in about 1995 working on the effort to redevelop downtown Florence. Their efforts gained momentum in 1999. They developed, with the help of consultants, a master plan for Florence. He served as chairman of the Florence 2010 committee that was responsible for the oversight of creating the master plan for downtown.

In 2003, the Florence Downtown Development Corporation was formed. He said a public/private partnership was formed. The Drs. Bruce & Lee Foundation was the fuel for the engine that accomplished the projects people see in downtown Florence today, he said. He said if it was not for the foundation’s funding or partial funding of many of the public projects already in place in downtown, the private sector would not be as far along as it is now.

He has also been involved with the Pecan Festival, Florence Little

Theatre and Dancing with Our Future Stars, and he has served on many boards and commissions. The firm has also been supporters of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Pee Dee Area, Downtown Roll, Heart Walk and others organizations and events.

George Jebaily said his parents instilled in them that to whom much is given, much is expected. “The community has embraced our family and has been very supportive,” he said.

All five Jebaily brothers live in Florence. Jerry is a doctor. Joe owns a manufacturing company, and John is in real estate. From their parents, they learned a love of theater and other arts. Their mother was a co-founder of the (Women’s) Symphony Guild. Their father volunteered with the Florence Little Theatre with costumes, to piggyback on his experience with “cut-and-sew” manufacturing with the Wentworth Company. George Jebaily said the costume room at the FLT is named after his parents, John and Sylvia.

He said the recent celebration was a chance to recognize his brother Ron, who is a first-generation college student who blazed the trail for many of them who are reaping the benefits. Second, George Jebaily said it is a chance to say thank you to the community: “We love Florence.”

He said it would not have been possible to reach this milestone without the 20 dedicated people who work with the law firm, including the five lawyers. In addition to Ron and George, the lawyers are Rangeley C. Bailey, Suzanne H. Jebaily and Brian S. Yost. “We are blessed with an incredible staff,” George Jebaily said.

They have so many employees who have been with them a long time. In 2015 they lost a staff member, Sonia Coe, who had been at the firm since 1972. When George Jebaily’s brother started the firm, it was just he and Coe. “The firm grew around them,” he said. “Our staff is critical to our success.”

The law firm has an office in Myrtle Beach and serves all of northeastern South Carolina.

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SHARE A LITTLE ALOHA WITH UNITED WAY

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



Kenya was able to earn her GED with support from the Florence Area Literacy Council and its staff.

Love can be an extremely powerful emotion. So powerful, that it can even completely change your life. Florence County resident Kenya found love after the birth of her daughter, and she loved her daughter so much that she knew she wanted to give her the best life possible. Kenya's life was currently going down a less than ideal path, and although she was employed, her financial goals were limited because she had not obtained her GED. Kenya decided that the best course for her and her daughter would be for her to go back to school, earn her GED, and pursue a career. To make sure she followed through, Kenya gave herself the deadline of having her GED completed before her daughter's first birthday.

Kenya also experienced love when she went to the Florence Area Literacy Council to begin the process of earning her GED. She felt the love of the staff that helped her through every test and every struggle, as well as the love of the community whose donations through the United Way of Florence County allow agencies to help people like Kenya. Because of that love, Kenya officially earned her GED just a few days before her daughter's first birthday and has gone on to pursue her nursing degree at Florence Darlington Technical College.

Kenya is just one of the thousands of people here in our community who had their lives changed for the better, thanks to donations made to the United Way of Florence County. As we began to prepare for our 2019-2020 campaign, we thought of how much of an impact we have had on the community just by the residents sharing a little love by donating. So this year, we want to encourage everyone to help us "Share A Little Aloha" (or love) with our community by making a donations.



United Way president, Kevin Russell, and United Way Campaign director, Joe Craig, at this year's Campaign Coordinator Training.

To give you a better idea of just how impactful it can be for the community when you share a little aloha with the United Way, we have listed just some of the results we were able to achieve through last year's donations to our campaign.

- 3,205 individuals received life-changing medical, dental, hearing or therapy services
- 4,746 youths were provided with programs that develop character and leadership skills
- 91,844 meals were delivered to homebound seniors citizens
- 4,230 individuals were provided with either a meal and/or a night's stay in a shelter
- 10,035 individuals received financial assistance to prevent eviction or keep utilities connected

These incredible results were achieved through the funds that were allocated to our partner agencies. This year, the partner agencies that will benefit from your donation include:

- American Red Cross – Eastern SC Chapter
- Boys & Girls Clubs of the Pee Dee
- 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



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- 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 & Sexual Assault
- Pee Dee Speech & Hearing Center
- The Salvation Army
- Senior Citizens Association of Florence County
- Youth Mentors of the Pee Dee

For more information about the United Way or to make a donation, please call 843-662-2407, or visit our website at uwflorence.org. Our campaign & donor relations director, Joe Craig, or our Co-Campaign chairs, Les Ward with Pepsi of Florence and Jamie Floyd with Florence County, are happy to help you with your donation or to help you get a campaign started within your company so you can share a little aloha with Florence County. You can also donate through your mobile phone by texting "FLORENCE" to 565-12.



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

The 3rd Annual "Lift Your Voice"

Gospel Choir and Spoken Word Showcase

Friday, February 28, 2020 -6:30 pm

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

FREE Admission with the Donation of 6 Canned Goods

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



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

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

Spoken Word Prizes:

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

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

CARING FOR THY NEIGHBOR: 3RD ANNUAL SENIOR HOLIDAY CARE BASKETS

Submitted by Ericka Bennett, Director of the Greater Lake City Community Resource Center, A Program of Lake City Creative Alliance



One senior is full of smiles after receiving a Care Basket delivered by local youth.

LAKE CITY - It's officially the holiday season! For most, this means endless shopping, late night laughter, a smorgasbord of food and plenty of quality time with family and friends. However, for many individuals in Lake City, the holiday season brings the total opposite--loneliness.

Did you know that approximately 250,000 elderly people will be spending their Christmas alone this year in the United States? Approximately 40 of those seniors live in greater Lake City.

These seniors are a part of the Lake City Police Department's Checkmate Program—a program catered towards senior citizens who live alone. Program participants typically do not have family members or friends that are physically able to visit with them on a regular basis.

Affectionately calling participants "People of Wisdom," Officer Pringle spearheads the Checkmate Program. Officer Pringle regularly visits the Checkmate participants and requires them to call her by a specific time daily.

After hearing about the Checkmate program and its benefits, the director of the Greater Lake City Community Resource Center, Ericka Bennett, decided to help brighten the smiles of these seniors—thus implementing the Resource Center's first annual community drive in December 2017. Two years later, the positive synergy associated with this effort has only gained positive energy!



Twins Gabrielle and Isabel celebrated their birthday by taking time out to donate to the 2nd Annual Senior Holiday Care Basket Community Drive!



Miss South Carolina Preteen and Young Miss Irmo "sweetened" seniors' day by donating treats for last year's community drive!



Nothing can beat the smile of a grateful heart!

This holiday season, the Resource Center isn't asking for money. They're asking that the community help them "be a friend" to the approximately 40 seniors in Lake City that will be spending Christmas alone this year. The Greater Lake City Community Resource Center is asking individuals, civic organizations and businesses to make donations towards the 3rd Annual Senior Holiday Care Baskets.

Items requested include:

- Postage stamps • Toothbrushes • Floss
- Mouthwash • Men's shaving kits • Bath towels
- Washcloths • Toilet Tissue • Dishwashing liquids • Dishcloths/Towels • Clorox/Lysol Wipes • Gain/Tide Pod Detergents • Paper Towels • Hard Candies

Bennett said, "We are hoping the community bands together and helps make our first community drive a success as in times past! Remember, we're standing on their shoulders, so help Seniors in our community this Christmas! Give them a glimpse of hope and joy by donating!"

Donations will be accepted at the Greater Lake City Community Resource Center, located at 410 West Main Street, until noon on Monday, Dec. 9. For more information, call 843- 374-0400, email communityoutreach@lccreativealliance.org, or visit their website at www.lccommunityoutreach.org

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BUILDING AN EMPIRE FROM BULLYING

by Jennifer Robinson



Ivy Ingram

Across the country, there are many campaigns to end bullying. But those campaigns are often geared towards childhood bullying, and schools are often targeted. Protecting our children is a priority and anti-bullying campaigns are a great start to helping raise awareness about this experience that can have lifelong impacts. Unfortunately, it is believed that bullying ends in childhood and that people just move past childhood mischief and name calling. The fact is

those behaviors often continue into adulthood and end up in the workplace.

Though workplace bullying is not a new issue, it is one that is now being highlighted in our society. According to Forbes magazine, 60 percent of U.S. workers are affected by bullying. This 60 percent were surveyed and willing to share their experiences, but some people who have been bullied in the workplace are not willing to be exposed, possibly to due to shame or fear. Forbes also states, "There is no legal definition of bullying, and there is no comprehensive list of bullying behaviors. The Trade Union Congress (TUC) states that "usually if a person genuinely feels they are being singled out for unfair treatment by a boss or colleague, they are 'probably' being bullied."

is control. Ingram decided she would choose higher thinking and turn her struggle into a message to help others who may be experiencing the same thing.

Bullies are insecure. Controlling others and instilling fear are their main goals in controlling their office space. They also use their power to influence others to bully. When Ingram realized this, she knew she had a choice to make. She wanted to work in peace and begin to exercise her rights. That first meant she would have to understand her rights. Therefore, she researched in her employee manual to determine whether policies were in place against workplace bullying. She found none. Next, she inquired about laws against workplace bullying and again found nothing. Because of the lack of findings against workplace bullying, Ingram decided she would be an advocate who would raise awareness against this uncommon form of bullying and empower those who had faced this challenge.

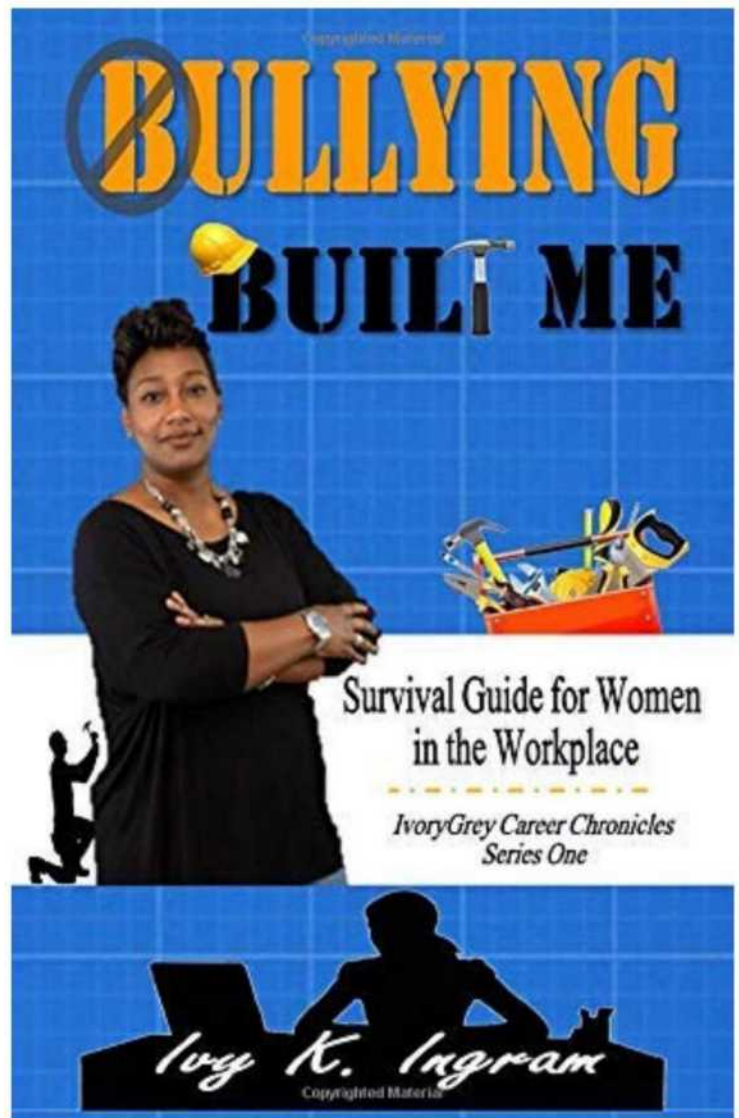
Although workplace bullying has not been widely recognized, efforts from former victims to educate people about the issue are being made. Ingram said one of her goals is to inform local politicians so they can then create laws that combat the issue.

In addition to being an author, she is a career coach who assists employees in workplace experiences. Her goal is to ensure that those who are now dealing with bullying or have ever been bullied in the workplace can now receive empowerment to better their work environment. Her past struggles and her overcoming those struggles led her to be a strong advocate that bullying built.



Local author Ivy Ingram recently released a book titled "Bullying Built Me: Survival Guide for Women in the Workplace" that shares her personal struggles with workplace bullying. She stated that bullying began in her life in childhood at school and in relationships. When she became an adult, co-workers and employers were the ones who would taunt her. She felt helpless and needed to find a way to better cope with what she was experiencing.

Seventy percent of men are the bully aggressors, and 35 percent of them are targets, whereas 30 percent of women are bullies, and 65 percent of them are targets (www.workplacebullying.org). Ingram's experience in bullying came from both men and women and sparked her interest in learning how to address the issue. She wanted to specifically address how women are being bullied. She recognized the under currents of adult or workplace bullying: taunting, humiliation, belittling, and devaluation. Ingram realized she was basing her self-worth on people who did not value her as an employee or as a human being. Ingram declares not only is there male versus female bullying, but peer gender bullying is also prevalent. The foundation of all bullying



NO VETERAN LEFT BEHIND by De'Angela Haynes



Clamentine Elmore

How do we protect those who have protected us as a country by serving in the Armed Forces? How do we provide security for those who have helped us to be secured? The United States' Veterans are important people. Remember, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 was signed by former President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002. This was a U.S. Act of Congress that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which included Title I provisions applying to disadvantaged students. The NCLB is a federal law that

provides money for extra educational assistance for poor children in return for improvements in their academic progress. NCLB is the most recent version of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Just like our federal government wants to ensure that there is no child left behind, we must ensure that there are no veterans left behind as it relates to benefits, financial stability and housing.

Veterans, there is help for you. The Housing Authority of Florence has programs in place that will assist you. Led by Clamentine Elmore, the executive director, she is informing the Pee Dee Region that there are great things happening for veterans, and she has a passion to help others to receive the benefits that they are qualified for. She stated that there is a program for Veterans to apply for to receive housing that is entitled Veterans Assistance Supportive Housing (V.A.S.H.). Initially in 2018, the Housing Authority received five vouchers from the Veteran Affairs (VA) Department to help veterans obtain housing. After applying for more, Elmore said that they have received 16 more vouchers to empower more veterans. The Housing of Authority of Florence has up to 21 vouchers, and they recently applied for five more so that they can assist other veterans within the Pee Dee Region, who are within the 50-mile radius of Florence.



Elmore stated that any veteran can apply. However, in order to qualify, veterans can come to the Housing Authority to fill out an application. They will direct each person to the Department of Veteran Affairs by giving them a telephone number to call, so that it can be determined if they are eligible for this voucher to receiving housing. The VA determines eligibility, not the Housing Authority. Once the eligibility is determined, and the veteran is qualified to receive the voucher for housing, the Housing Authority of Florence will provide the necessary steps for the veterans to move forward.

With regular housing vouchers through their department, there is a waiting list, but there is no waiting list for veterans when they apply for the V.A.S.H. Voucher Program. B.A.S.H. has approximately 12 vouchers available and wants to ensure that people know about this great opportunity. Not only are veterans assisted with housing, but the VA also provides additional services for individuals who have trouble

with alcohol, substance abuse, unemployment and assistance with transportation. These are services available to veterans that are associated with the V.A.S.H. program. Then, once veterans, complete their programs, they are able to transfer the V.A.S.H. vouchers to regular vouchers, but what is even more exciting is that once many of the people have completed these programs, they no longer qualify because of their substantial living. They obtain better jobs, become more financially stable and move on to do great things in life. What the Housing Authority of Florence does is more than offer housing, but they help to empower and dignify veterans by providing services to bridge the gaps. Elmore said that the more people apply, the more vouchers they can get from the VA. This great organization wants to ensure that there is No Veteran Left Behind.



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15 INDICATIONS THAT YOU NEED BETTER BOUNDARIES by Robin Lewis



HEMINGWAY—Even though I felt trapped by the choices of others, hearing the word “boundaries” frightened me. I was raised in the church and taught to be kind, to share and to love my friends and enemies alike. But the way I interpreted what I was taught plus the way life was modeled for me left room for manipulation and abuse to occur. In my first marriage I felt like I was being pulled in every direction until there wasn’t much of me left. I said “yes” to nearly every request for help and didn’t know how to ward off blame and hurtful actions by others.

In trying to be a “good Christian” wife, employee, and friend, I was being taken advantage of. Weren’t boundaries going to make people mad if I started saying “no?” The truth is, I was being ruled by Satan’s best tool: fear.

I realized after many years of manipulation that if I was going to survive, I needed boundaries! I found that God wanted me to have appropriate boundaries – to be able to say, “yes, that’s great” or “I don’t like it when you yell at me,” or even “I ain’t havin’ it!” when needed.

I invited God to heal my soul, and I began growing my boundaries. My life is totally different today. With godly boundaries comes new confidence and a right sense of personal empowerment that God created for me to enjoy (2 Timothy 1:7).

Do you need better boundaries?

Boundaries in relationships draw a line. They tell us where we can go and where we need to stop. Just like fences between neighbors or property lines between farms, boundaries let us know where our space and responsibility end and where someone else’s begin. They tell us what kind of behavior is expected of us and let others know what we expect of them.

Boundaries protect what is yours: your body, time, money, job, relationships or other life areas. Boundaries are the equivalent of saying, “Hold your horses!” In other words, stop right there. Boundaries also remind us not to trespass in the lives of others in disrespectful ways.

Why is it important to have boundaries?

Setting clear boundaries is the key to ensuring relationships are mutually respectful. Boundaries measure things like confidence and self-esteem. When you have a healthy sense of your own individuality and self-respect, you become equipped to set boundaries which show you expect to be treated with respect. A lack of boundaries can leave you worn slap out”(that’s a few degrees past weary but not quite dog-tired.)

Healthy boundaries boost our self-esteem and prevent us from negative responses and habits, for instance: people-pleasing, wrong responsibility, codependency, and even bitterness.

Are boundaries unkind?

Some people who have been controlling or disregarding you won’t like it when you begin setting new limits with them, but boundaries

are not unkind. A wise woman once said, “Say what you mean, but don’t be mean when you say it!”

The Bible teaches that setting boundaries is a form of walking in your own personal power. 2 Timothy 1:7 says, “For God has not given you a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind.” When you establish and communicate boundaries, you begin to grow into more of the confident and powerful person God created you to be!

15 indications that you need better boundaries:

1. You always put others before yourself, no matter what.
2. You always give to others when they ask for help, money or assistance.
3. You have trouble saying “no” and practice self-blaming.
4. You often feel resentment for others but guilt when you say what you need.
5. Family or others control you with their words or emotions.
6. Others regularly impact your decision-making by nosing in.
7. Someone else always decides things for you.
8. You regularly receive verbal abuse, wrong control, or manipulation.
9. When you state your opinion, others make you feel crazy.
10. You suffer from low self-esteem and are always trying to “be better.”
11. Other’s choices affect your life in negative ways, ignoring your needs.
12. You often compromise your values or try to “help” someone else.
13. You feel like you don’t have a voice.
14. Others blame you when things don’t go their way.
15. You often have feelings of powerlessness and work to keep others happy.

Boundaries Must Be Communicated



We must communicate our boundaries so that others to know what they are. We must not be afraid of conflict, for fear silences us. We must learn to speak up, find our voice, and let others know what is acceptable behavior. If we choose instead to walk in fear, we will continue to suffer the disrespect of others.

The most basic boundary setting word is a simple “no.” You have permission from God to set the boundaries you need in your life and the responsibility to respect the boundaries of others.

Setting Limits with Ourselves

Boundaries do more than prevent others from trespassing in our lives; boundaries also keep us from trespassing in the lives of others. Boundaries tell us where we end and where someone else begins. In the same way that we resent it when others try to control or disrespect us, they feel the same way if we treat them disrespectfully. Be careful of self-justification that can blind you to your own faults and ask God to show you where you need to establish new boundaries and where you need to respect the lives of others.

Get Expert Help!

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GOLDEN MESSAGES DELIVERED TO THE YOUTH by Dawn "D.A." Goodwin



Pastor LaNola Goings: Thursday night's speaker.

More often than ever, today's youth are quick to turn their focus to anything related to social media or technology, which can make it difficult to get them to open up and be themselves without fear of judgment. But what better way to gain the youth's attention than to have them learn from an individual who is also young but is an inspiring role model as well? In August, when Kingdom Builders Christian Church held its first annual youth conference, it did just that by bringing BET's Sunday Best Season 7 Winner, Geoffrey Golden, to speak to the youth and teach them all about what

he called "Love 101."

The two-day conference aimed at showing the value the youth have and the purpose God has for their lives. Therefore, Kingdom Builders allowed the youth to expose their gifts and talents to the congregation, whether it was by rapping or singing. Bill Bradley, Jr. & Heart of Worship praise team did praise and worship on the second night.



Geoffrey Golden and some of the youth on the second night of the conference.

The speakers for the very well-organized conference were Pastor LaNola Goings of the Heart of Christ Church in Sumter, who is also a recording artist, and Minister Geoffrey Golden, whose heartwarming, powerful melodies you may have heard by watching Sunday Best, a hit gospel singing competition that he won in 2014. Goings brought the message on the first night of the conference while Minister Tyrone Phillips Jr., Kingdom Builder's youth coordinator, was the emcee the next night.

Phillips said God placed it on his heart to speak to the youth's lives and to get those particular speakers: "Many talk about the bad things they [the youth] are doing and not about the purpose they already



Rebecca Golden, Tyrone Phillips Jr. and Geoffrey Golden

have to continue doing great things in home, college and church. Psalms 127:4 states how children are arrows in the hands of warriors, able to do things in the world, but we have to release them and allow them to do what they are called to do." Another message Phillips had for young people was, "Don't let anyone choke the life out of your dreams."

Golden's message focused on how the Bible teaches us what love is when all around the world the images that are portrayed of love are not quite that. He said that we can find truth about what love is by looking in the Bible. During the conference, he covered five units and then gave one-question quizzes at the end of each. Some included, Unit 1, which spoke on "untreated love," Unit 2, which was about "the choice of love," and Unit 3, which touched on "the consequences of love." He left the youth with so many powerful messages to carry with them in their daily lives, but one in particular was that "love is all about what we are willing to give for the good of somebody else." And Golden added that it's all about respecting others, including their parents as well as teachers.

The youth in attendance were not only impressed by the 25-year-old and his message, but they were excited because they enjoyed the atmosphere in which they could freely give their own gifts of praise. They enjoyed the worship and the word and even stated that they want Golden to come back again.

Phillips said that next year's youth conference will be in same month, targeting more youth for back to school. While this year's conference had close to 50 youth in attendance, he plans for next year's event to be even bigger.

Kingdom Builders Christian Church is located at 902 Pennsylvania Street, Florence, S.C., 29501, where Tyrone Phillips Sr. is the pastor.



FROM PITFALLS TO PURPOSE

Submitted by Keith Smith, In the Gap Motivational, LLC



Keith Smith

COLUMBIA-Choices affect our life from the time we are born until we depart this earth. They are not predicated upon dimensions of life or stages of existence. No one is exempt from the repercussions of the choices we make, good or bad. Your personal choices not only affect you but can impact other lives. I know this part all too well.

My life from childhood until early 30s was pretty normal, positive and headed in a successful path. I grew up in a middle class environment with both parents in the home. My father was a career law

enforcement officer. My mom did clerical work, and I had a younger brother. Upon graduating high school, I attended Clemson University on a full scholarship. Unfortunately, due to a bad injury I could no longer play football and returned home. I got married young and had a family of three daughters. By this time I had a great job as transportation director with a major corporation and a home in the town I grew up in. My life up until this point was pretty simple but satisfying. I lived the life of someone who had been trained from a childhood to make good choices, but like the lyric in the song "Collide" by Howie Day says, "Even the best fall down sometimes."

Later I obtained my life-long goal of becoming a police officer, just like my dad. However, one day with a simple doctor's visit my life took a drastic turn. I was experiencing pain in my neck and lower back due to old sports injuries and heavy weight training. That was the day I was introduced to the world of opioids, a prescribed narcotic for pain, otherwise known as painkillers. They can be moderate to very strong in strength and highly addictive. Consumption of the pain medication was new for me; my tolerance level grew stronger and stronger. Soon I realized not only did this drug provide relief from the pain I was feeling, but it also provided an escape from the everyday pressures (life, job, family and friends). This created a downward spiral, causing me to drift deeper and deeper into dependency and addiction. Due to my social standing, job title and leadership within the community, I felt as though I had to keep this part of my life hidden from everyone. Consequently, I was living a double-life. Therefore, I sought out no help or guidance from my influential friends who could have helped me. This began the snowball effect.

With my professional career as a police officer came much power and authority--power and authority that was misused to keep hidden and fund this addiction. I allowed this addiction to infiltrate my thought process, so much so, that it began to give me a feeling of being untouchable. Now, this process began to take me away from ridding the very community I had sworn to protect and serve from drugs to being the very one to aid the drug world with more drugs and ensure the movement of these products onto the streets in which I lived. These actions were all for my selfish and financial gain to fund my very own addiction, which ultimately led to being blind-sided by my own investigation resulting in my incarceration.

During my eight and a half years of incarceration, it afforded me an opportunity of a much-needed change, primarily that of detoxing from pain medications. Once regaining my fundamental thought process, I began to take this opportunity to better myself. The first positive choice in which I had made was establishing a much needed intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Upon building this faith foundation, it helped ignite my progress by getting involved with bible study groups and various self-improvement programs and my enrollment into educational classes. My real therapy came when I was given an opportunity to work on the South Carolina Department of Correction

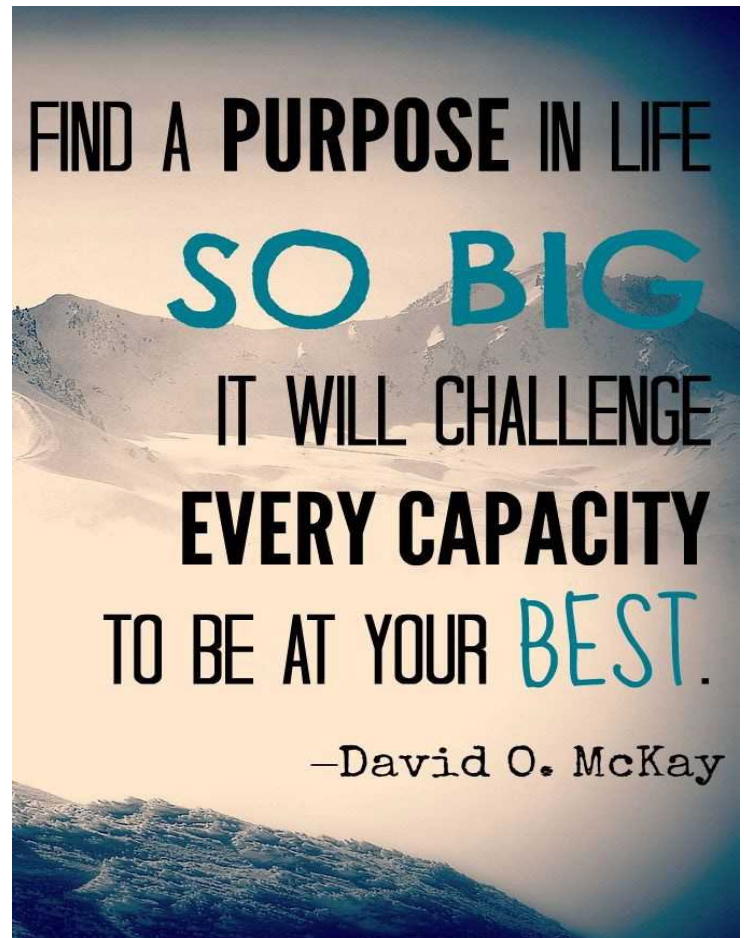


Keith Smith photo while in prison

top program called Operation Get Smart. This is a crime prevention program in which only five inmates are selected to travel throughout the state speaking to at-risk youth and adults in hopes of preventing them from making bad choices and decisions. This time on the team allowed me to develop and master motivational speaking, allowing me to make over 3,000 presentations and speak to over 200,000 people about my life to positively impact their lives.

Post incarceration, two and a half years later, Jesus Christ is still my foundation and has directed me in a resurgence of change by bestowing me with a much better life than I ever imagined possible. I have been blessed with a new wife, a blended family and a flourishing relationship with my three daughters and eleven grandchildren. Along with full-time employment, my wife and I have founded our own company, In the Gap Motivational, LLC, in which we provide life changing services. We also have a 501(c)3, In the Gap Foundation, which is geared towards various outreach opportunities such as prison ministry, homeless shelters, at-risk and re-entry programs. This fall we have a broadcast and podcast show, In the Gap on WYTV7 Christian Broadcast Network. The broadcast airs on Thursdays at 6 p.m. EST and podcast is released on Fridays at noon EST and can be heard throughout the United States and 25 countries.

As referenced earlier, even the best fall down sometimes. Just you wait until you hear the rise of how I got back up. You are sure to experience "the SMOKE is in my testimony!" To find out more about us, book our services and information about our foundation visit our website inthegapmotivational.com, or send us an e-mail at itgmotivational@gmail.com.



NEW HORIZONS FOR LEE COUNTY SCHOOLS by De'Angela Haynes



Dr. Wanda Andrews, Superintendent

BISHOPVILLE -The success or failure of any organization is determined by its leadership. It was once said that, "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader" (**John Quincy Adams**). This is definitely the case for the Lee County School District, which is led by Dr. Wanda Andrews. She not only serves as the superintendent for this great educational community, but she is also willing to get the work done by providing great opportunities for the students as well

as the staff of Lee County Schools.

It was also said, "Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail" (**Ralph Waldo Emerson**).

Andrews said that there are some new initiatives being implemented in their educational programs. One is called "Lee Talks," which follows on the order of "Ed Talks," and this helps with collaboration and showing information throughout the district so that everyone has the same information. It is a recording that everyone can see. This new initiative helps to serve the staff better in professional development. The second initiative for this year is working to make sure that each child in their district has a mentor or advocate assigned to him/her.



LCSD Superintendent Dr. Wanda Andrews greets the district's Teacher of the Year 2019 Mark Davidson.

Andrews and everyone in the district are to serve as a mentor, and this is to ensure that all children know that they are cared for and to help close the gap in their educational performances.

The district is also partnering and networking with the faith-based

community to serve as mentors for the students. This academic school year of 2019-2020, they have signed agreements so that students will be able to take their Chromebooks home. This is to ensure that each student will be able to do his or her homework and study regardless of what his or her economic status is. Despite the depravity of Lee County's economic status, the school district has things in place to help students be successful academically.

The last initiative Andrews shared is being implemented in their schools, especially with high school students, to help prepare them for college and careers, as well as how to be successful in the 21st Century. The district is inviting successful people such as Bakari Sellers and others to give hope to our students that they can be successful too. They will partner and network with others to implement Creative Writing Classes and those who will help students who want to further their careers in the military. The school district will continue

LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



A LEARNING COMMUNITY
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LCSD Superintendent Dr. Wanda Andrews and Gov. Henry McMaster mull over the woes of education funding in rural South Carolina, specifically in Lee County.

expanding on college tours and tours to other places in order to expose students to more than their local region.

The early college/dual credit program has helped tremendously this past year, and there were four students to graduate with their associate degree before they got their high school diplomas.

Andrews said that 13 students walked across the stage with their General Education certificates, with only a few credits away from their associate degree. Lee County Schools continued seeing success among their high graduates, who earned over \$14 million dollars in scholarships. There 142 graduates and among them, eight students to join the military. Their JROTC program is successful! For the Senior Project this year, they will be working on a documentary about the history of their county, so this is exciting and historic for Lee County School District.



LCSD Board Chairperson Sonya Moses, Sen. Gerald Malloy (S.C. District 29), and LCSD Superintendent Dr. Wanda Andrews

The last thing Dr. Andrews shared was that instead of just celebrating Black History in the month of February, starting this year, each month, the schools will be doing more. "We are celebrating inventors, successful black people, and we will have a theme for each month."

Lee County Schools are on the rise to higher heights and equipping their students to be successful in the 21st Century. "We do understand that we would not be able to do any of this, without partnering with our Parents/Guardians and Community. We (District Staff) are reading the book "The One Thing" by Gary Keller with Jay Papasan. One of the things we will focus on is for the 2019-20 as a district is relationships. We are working hard to build them with students, parent, community members and with each other as a team. The district is sponsoring the first field study trip for parents and students on September 21, 2019 to the African-American Jubilee in Columbia. It is said before that our attitude determines our altitude," Andrews said.



-- Gary Keller



Congratulations Class of 2019 !

Lee County School District

141 Lee Central High School Graduates



14 + Million Dollars in Scholarships
4 students earned Associates Degrees at CCTC
15 students earned General Ed Certificates at CCTC
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FMU RECOGNIZED AS GREAT COLLEGE TO WORK FOR Submitted by FMU



Francis Marion University has been recognized as a Great Colleges to Work For® Honor Roll School for a seventh straight year. The recognition was released today by The Chronicle of Higher Education, the leading

journal of university and college life.

FMU is one of just 85, four-year colleges and universities in the nation recognized by The Chronicle, and one of only 42 recognized as an Honor Roll school. Among those joining FMU on the list of Honor Roll universities were Baylor University, Mississippi State University, and Florida International University.

FMU is the only South Carolina institution listed on the Honor Roll for 2019. The recognition is based primarily on a survey administered to faculty and staff in universities across the country, and compiled by a third party, Modern Think, a nationally recognized business consultant to universities and other institutions. Hundreds of institutions nationwide were surveyed as part of that process.

FMU's Honor Roll designation means that it received distinction ratings (70 percent positive ratings or higher) in all 15 categories measured. FMU has been recognized as an Honor Roll school every year it's been on the list.

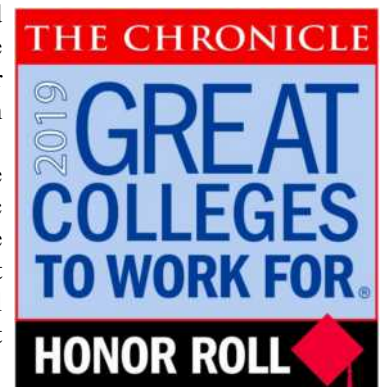
Dr. Fred Carter, FMU's president, says the ongoing recognition

by the Chronicle is an honor the University's leaders have long been proud of. "FMU is proud to be on this prestigious list for the seventh consecutive year," says Carter. "We are there because of the spirit of collaboration and cooperation exhibited by the faculty and staff at this university. Their efforts are responsible for this recognition and so many other good things that occur at this university."

FMU's employees reported high satisfaction in Collaborative Governance; Professional/Career Development; Teaching Environment; Facilities, Workplace and Security; Job Satisfaction; Work/Life Balance; Policies, Resources and Efficiency; University Pride; Communication; Collaboration; Fairness; Confidence in Senior Leadership; Supervisor/Department Chair Relationship; Respect and Appreciation; and Tenure Clarity and Process.

The survey results are based on a two-part assessment process: an institutional questionnaire that captured employment data and workplace policies from each institution and a survey administered to faculty, administrators and professional support staff. The primary factor in deciding whether an institution received recognition was the employee feedback.

FMU's ranking is part of The Chronicle's ninth annual Academic Workplace Special Issue, available to subscribers online today. It posted in The Chronicle's annual workplace special section in print on Sept. 20.



BRADLEY WORKS TO DECREASE CAREER-READY GAP by Les Echols



Alphonso Bradley

The gap between skilled workers and job opportunities has caused more emphasis to be placed on education focused on career development. Diversity Works caught up with Marlboro County Career Technology Education (CTE) director and Education and Economic Development Act (EEDA) district coordinator Alphonso Bradley. Bradley is an educator with almost 30 years of experience. In his current role, he serves

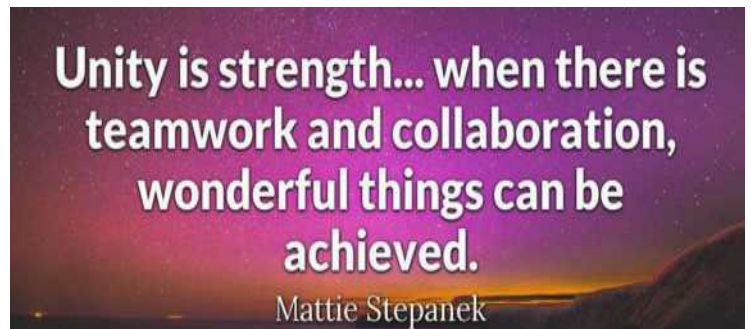
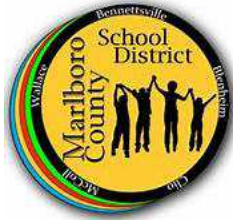
as the administrator over all career-related courses and instructors in the Marlboro County School District. In addition, he writes and administers the Carl Perkins Grant and funding grants for all career and technology funds. As EEDA district coordinator, Bradley also oversees all the district's Global Career Development facilitators and ensures that the EEDA law is fully implemented.

Bradley's award-winning career and history of innovative accomplishments and exceeding goals has not impeded his work ethic. His day-to-day consists of hours of supervision, program development and implementation. "I come in at 7 a.m. and help with supervising students in the cafeteria. Then I go to my office and plan and execute my plans for CTE and EEDA implementation. I break from that to observe classes and meet with teachers and students. I supervise students at lunch, followed by answering emails, attending school and district meetings, observe more classes..." Bradley continued. "This year I am focusing

on increasing the number of students serving as youth interns and youth apprentices. I want to increase the number of students completing CTE programs and earning national and international industry certifications. We are adding new student organizations that allow students to attend local, state, and national conferences and competitions. We are working to create a generation of young people who are truly college and career ready," Bradley concluded.

Bradley, who returned to work in the field of education after a two-year hiatus to run a business, also maintains his strong sense of community service and diversity. "For our society to reach its full potential in terms of diversity and inclusion, we must have input from everyone regardless of their race, sex, age or religion. Students are still full of potential and promise. I still get excited about helping them reach their career goals in life. We must tap into the talents of all people," said Bradley.

Alphonso Bradley holds a Bachelor of Science in Education in Industrial Arts Education, a master's in education, and an education specialist degree. He is currently completing his doctorate in education.



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CLAFLIN UNIVERSITY RANKED AMONG TOP 10 HBCUS

Submitted by J. Craig Cotton, Director of Public Relations Clafin University



ORANGEBURG - Clafin University's innovative academic programs, world-class faculty and high-achieving visionary scholars were the catalyst for U.S. News and World Report, ranking Clafin ninth in its 2020 ranking of the nation's top HBCUs. The prestigious publication has recognized Clafin as one of nation's Top 10 HBCUs for nine consecutive years.

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 it must be a school that is part of the 2019 Best Colleges rankings.

Founded in 1869, Clafin is celebrating its 150th anniversary as South Carolina's oldest HBCU and the state's first institution of higher education to provide educational opportunities to all students regardless of gender, race, religion or ethnic origin.

In total, 80 HBCUs were eligible to be included on the list; 76 of those were ranked and four were unranked. Among the 76 ranked HBCUs, schools that place in the top three-fourths display their individual ranks. The remaining ranked schools display the bottom quartile numerical ranking range and are listed alphabetically.

Clafin's academic highlights during the 2018-19 academic year included the RN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing program receiving accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

(CCNE) Board of Commissioners and the Computer Science program earning accreditation by the Computer Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Significantly, Clafin is now one of only three private colleges or universities in the state of South Carolina with ABET accreditation.

U.S. News and World Report ranked Clafin ninth overall among the schools in the Best Regional Colleges South rankings. These are institutions that focus on undergraduate education but grant fewer than half their degrees in liberal arts disciplines. Regional Colleges rankings are split into four regions: North, South, Midwest and West. Clafin was listed in the Top 10 in three other Best Regional Colleges South rankings.

Clafin was third as a Best College for Veterans; fourth in Most Innovative Schools; and seventh for Best Undergraduate Teaching.

Best Colleges for Veterans are the top-ranked schools that participate in federal initiatives that help veterans and active duty service members pay for their degrees.

Institutions in the Most Innovative Schools rankings were selected by college presidents, provosts and admissions deans who were asked to nominate up to 15 colleges or universities that are making the most innovative improvements in terms of curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology or facilities.

The Best Undergraduate Teaching category comprises schools that have a strong commitment to teaching undergraduates instead of conducting graduate-level research. The institutions listed received the most votes in a survey conducted during Spring 2019, from top college administrators for putting a particular focus on undergraduate teaching.

For the complete list of U.S. News and World Report rankings, visit <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities>.

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WILSON STUDENTS ARE IB DIPLOMA RECIPIENTS

Submitted by Pamela Little-McDaniel, Director Florence 1 Schools Office of Public Information



Front row, left to right: Simran Singh, John Odasco, Annie Kate Watson, Briya Shah, and Gracie Hinson; second row, left to right: Mary Huang, Hanna Ward, Alice Lee, Lily Andrews, Cairns Desai, and Parker Denton; third row, left to right: Diego Hernandez-Ramirez, Alex Reid, Davis Ivey, Reed Bausmith, James Wesley Hannah, and Justin Hedges. Not pictured are: Samai Bhojwani, Nicholas Jacobs, Katelyn Franck, James Belt, Isabel Townsend, Emily Bonds, Dulce Dubose, Cameron Byrd and Bethany Williams.

Demonstrating unconditional pride and acceptance of the Wilson tradition, Wilson High Schools' International Baccalaureate Program diploma recipients scored above the world average in English Literature, Spanish, History, Sports, Exercise and Health, Mathematics and Biology. Students taking English, History, German, Spanish, Visual Arts, Theory of Knowledge and extended essay sections had over 90 percent pass rates with scores in four of those areas exceeding the international average.

Brian Howell, director of the International Baccalaureate Program for Florence 1 Schools, said that he was very pleased with this year's results.

"We had a high pass rate again this year and a number of students who received a perfect score in a subject area," Howell said. "That reflects very well of our program's rigor as well as the hard work and dedication of our students."

In order to receive an IB Diploma, students must graduate with at least 24 combined points from attempted IB courses including the essential elements of the Diploma Programme core: The Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay.

Wilson had 26 students in the class of 2019 graduate with an IB Diploma, one more than the previous school year.

"Seeing an increased number of students graduating with this distinguished diploma is fantastic," Howell said. "These students have worked diligently, many of them since middle school, and they are well prepared for college. Graduates are wearing T-shirts which represent the college or university they plan to attend this fall."



EARLY CHILDHOOD AMBASSADORS MEET

Submitted by Debbie Hyler, Executive Director, The School Foundation



Early Childhood Ambassadors photo September 2019

The Early Childhood Ambassadors program, a joint program between Florence 1 Schools (FIS) and The School Foundation, is preparing for an exciting year. Designed to give local early childhood leaders in schools, child care centers, community organizations and businesses a unique opportunity to look at contemporary topics in early childhood, Ambassadors will meet firsthand with top experts in the field of early childhood education who lead new educational trends for young children. Over the course of six months, they will hear about new and insightful curriculum and research that are changing early childhood education in positive and creative ways.

"I am so excited that our Ambassadors have the opportunity to take part in direct exchange with international, national and regional experts in their respective fields of expertise," said Debbie Hyler, executive director of The School Foundation. "Each month's program will center on a unique topic or experience and will offer opportunities for early childhood leaders to learn about new ideas and insightful research impacting young children in Florence."

"The Ambassadors program is an opportunity for the community members that serve children to come together and participate in training that would normally not be available locally," said Dr. Floyd Creech, FIS director of School Readiness. "The School Foundation and Florence 1 Schools have joined together to create exciting opportunities and new possibilities for the children of Florence."

Members of this year's Early Childhood Ambassadors program are:

- Susan Bailey, McLeod Nurse Family Partnership
- Jessica Brown, All 4 Autism
- Veyounder Brown, Lighthouse Ministries
- Darlene Buchanan, City of Florence Parks & Recreation
- Robbie Burns, Florence Career Center
- Trisha Caulder, FIS Board of Trustees
- Paula Childers, Florence County Library
- Dr. Floyd Creech, FIS Director of School Readiness
- Merrette Dowdell, HopeHealth
- Michele Driggers, Ebenezer Weekday Ministry
- Brice Elvington, Florence Pediatric Dentistry/The Toy Shop
- Dr. Jeanne Gunther, Francis Marion University
- Kimry-Ann Haughn, McLeod Child Development Center
- Beth Hepler, First Presbyterian Child Development Center
- Debbie Hyler, The School Foundation
- Judy Kammer, StartSMART Advisory Council
- Flicka McBratney, FIS – R.N. Beck Child Development Center
- Kymberly Merritts, Junior League of Florence
- Senora Mumford, Retired
- Soha Patel, The Little Gym of Florence
- Joan Pennstrom, All Saints' Day School
- Beth Prosser, Highland Park Kindergarten
- Lisa Riley, FIS – Child Development Center at Woods Road
- Sarah Roland, McLeod Children's Hospital
- Sarah Sweeney, Care House of the Pee Dee
- Jennifer Turner, McLeod Nurse Family Partnership
- Jennifer Walters, Central United Methodist Church
- Melissa Ward, Center for the Child
- Diane Welsh, Help 4 Kids Florence
- Dave Wysong, Montessori School of Florence

For additional information, contact Debbie Hyler, executive director, The School Foundation, dhyler@theschoolfoundation.org or at 843-662-9996. StartSMARTFlo.org

CANCER CENTERS TO INCLUDE MORE DIVERSITY Submitted by Dawn Brazell



Dr. Marvella E. Ford speaking at an AME conference. (Photo by Dawn Brazell)

CHARLESTON-Not one size fits all, and nowhere does that show up more than in cancer trial recruitment of racial and ethnic minorities, says Hollings Cancer Center researcher Marvella E. Ford, Ph.D., associate director of population sciences and cancer disparities at MUSC Hollings Cancer Center. She was part of a study involving eight cancer centers looking at best practices and providing recommendations for how these populations can best be

engaged in clinical trials.

“This is a major focus of the National Cancer Institute, and it’s very important because we need to make sure that at the end of the day the research results can be generalized across multiple population groups,” she says. “We can’t use a one-size-fits-all approach and use the same recruitment strategies in every single group. We really have to tailor the recruitment strategies to the needs of the group.”

The study identified that African Americans, who represent 13 percent of the general U.S. population, comprise five percent of patients enrolled in clinical trials, with Asian Americans and Hispanics comprising only about three percent.

Ford says researchers must take a different tack with racial and ethnic minority groups. “We can’t recruit all groups the same because different groups have different relationships, histories and past abuses with the health care system and with the federal government.”

Though minority enrollment in clinical trials tends to be low in general, it’s particularly an issue in cancer, where advances in research are driving a paradigm shift in precision medicine. It’s important that the development of personalized medicines that account for biologic factors, such as genetics, gender, race and ethnicity, have a diverse pool of participants.

A key component in increased inclusion is the development of trust in the community. One tactic Hollings Cancer Center uses is its MOVENUP Program, which takes a train-the-trainer approach in rural communities that are medically underserved. The program is now being expanded in a new partnership with the Seventh Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, with monthly programs planned, including modules on clinical trials, to reach its more than 400 churches spread across the state.

Though research is about data, the core of it is about people, Ford says. “We want to bring in community members and talk to them and bring in key people from the community who can advocate for the trials that we’re conducting. Communities want a relationship with the people who are conducting the trial. They don’t want a nameless, faceless entity. That doesn’t mean anything to them,” she says.



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FDTC STUDENTS RECEIVE FACULTY SENATE AWARDS Articles submitted by FDTC



Florence-Darlington Technical College students pose with members of the college faculty after receiving the Ken Cox Faculty Senate Scholarship. From left to right are: Winfield Brown, Faculty Senate president; Maria Sierra Rico, scholarship recipient; Max Everhart, English instructor; Tabitha Martin, scholarship recipient; and Brantlee Haire, Psychology instructor.

their educational journey. The Ken Cox Faculty Senate Scholarship is funded by faculty donations made to the FDTC Educational Foundation. The scholarship is named for the late English instructor, Ken Cox.

Faculty Senate President Winfield Brown said, “Thanks to the

Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) students Tabitha Martin and Maria Sierra Rico were awarded the Ken Cox Faculty Senate Scholarship. Each of the \$600 scholarships will be used to assist

generosity of the faculty, over \$10,000 in scholarships have been awarded since its inception in 2007.”

Nominated by Psychology instructor, Brantlee Haire, Tabitha Martin is seeking her degree in Human Services. The Timmonsville resident plans on continuing her education and dreams of becoming a child counselor. Haire nominated Martin saying, “Tabby is a hard worker with a busy schedule, and yet she always takes the time to be helpful to her classmates. She is a positive force that brings sunshine into your day!”

English instructor, Max Everhart nominated Florence student Maria Sierra Rico, also seeking her degree in Human Services. Everhart says Rico is an outstanding student that has shown great progress, earning a 3.8 GPA. Everhart said, “Maria regularly went to the Success Center for help and even showed up during my office hours to ask for help as well. Bottom line, she is the kind of persistent, motivated student that deserves this scholarship.”

FCTC TO AWARD SC PROMISE THROUGH SPRING 2020



Florence-Darlington Technical College will continue to award the SC Promise Scholarship through the 2020 Spring Semester. The scholarship program that originally launched in 2018 allows students who graduated from eligible Pee Dee region high schools to have an

opportunity to possibly obtain an education for free at FDTC.

Funded by the General Assembly and administered by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education, the SC Promise Scholarship Program launched to provide higher education to high school students. Students who participate in the program may receive up to \$2,000 each academic year following financial assistance from the Pell Grant, Tuition Grant, LIFE Scholarship and Lottery Tuition Assistance (LTA). The scholarship also includes a \$300 allowance for textbooks. If students maintain a 2.0 GPA, the funding will follow them each semester.

To qualify for SC Promise Scholarship Program funding, a student must meet specific requirements. The first requirement is that students must have earned a high school diploma or GED from eligible Pee Dee

region public or private high schools between the years of 2013 and 2019. Eligible high schools include Carolina Academy, Creek Bridge, Faith Christian Academy of Florence, Hannah Pamplico, Johnsonville, King’s Academy, Lake City, Marion, Mullins, Pee Dee Academy, South Florence, Timmonsville, West Florence and Wilson. Next, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as the SC Promise Scholarship Application. Potential FDTC students who want to qualify for funding from the SC Promise Scholarship Program must enroll into the college and pursue a certificate, diploma or degree; however, students who have already earned a bachelor’s degree are not eligible for the scholarship funding. Once accepted into FDTC, students must then enroll into at least six credit hours throughout the 2019 Fall Semester or the 2020 Spring Semester. Students must also maintain a 2.0 GPA while enrolled in classes at FDTC. The final requirement to receive scholarship funding is that students must participate in FDTC free mentoring activities.

For more information on how to participate in the SC Promise Scholarship Program at FDTC, please contact FDTC’s Financial Aid Office at 843-661-8085. To register for classes at FDTC, visit www.fdtc.edu or contact Admissions at 843-661-8289.

FDTC ALLIED HEALTH GRADUATES EXCEL ON STATE BOARD



A Florence-Darlington Technical College dental student cleans a young girl’s teeth during a Head Start event at the Health Sciences Campus.

Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) Dental, Nursing and Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) graduates continue to set the bar high for health care in the Pee Dee region by scoring impressive numbers on state board testing or professional licensure examinations.

FDTC’s Dental Hygiene and Expanded Duty Dental Assisting programs recently scored 100 percent on the national board. The Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association accredits

both of these programs at FDTC.

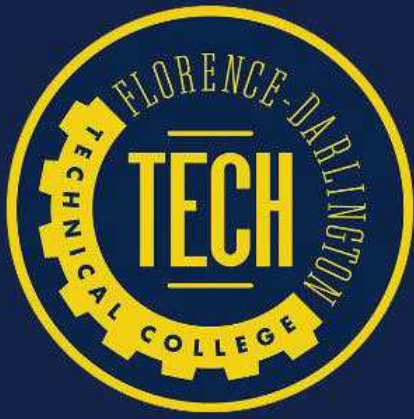
Dental Hygiene is an associate degree program that is five semesters and is comprised of didactic, clinical and laboratory courses. Expanded-Duty Dental Assisting is a diploma program that is three semesters. Students in both programs gain hands-on training through on-site and off-site clinical experiences.

Every quarter, the State Board of Nursing sends out a pass rate to all nursing programs. FDTC’s Practical Nursing (PN) recent graduates scored 100 percent on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). FDTC’s PN program, in three semesters, prepares students for a vocation

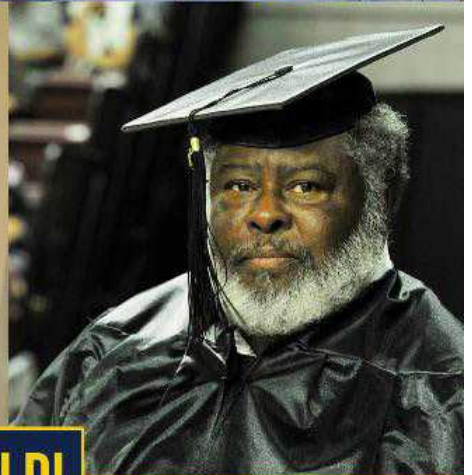
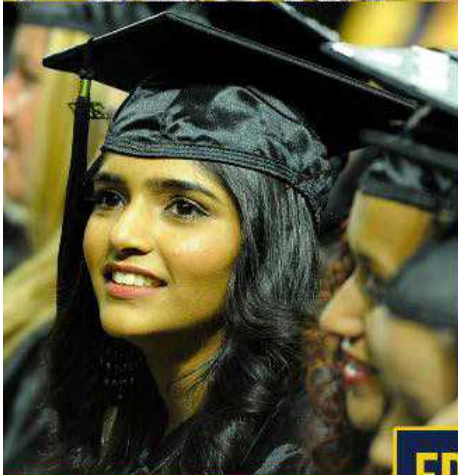
requiring intellectual, interpersonal and psychomotor skills that are based upon biological, behavioral and humanistic principles. Once graduates pass the NCLEX, they are qualified to work in an array of settings as a PN.

Graduates of the Associate Degree of Nursing (ADN) program are educated and trained over the course of five semesters to work in a variety of settings in hospitals, clinics and outpatient centers. Once an ADN graduate has passed the NCLEX, he or she becomes a Registered Nurse (RN). The ADN program’s graduating class of May 2019 has 100 percent pass rate for the NCLEX with only two students remaining to be tested.

FDTC’s MLT program provides a comprehensive technical education that prepares graduates to work in the medical, clinical and research laboratory industry. With only a few students remaining to complete the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP), Board of Certification (BOC) examination, the MLT program is also boasting a 100 percent pass rate. Graduates are officially certified upon completion of the ASCP-BOC. For more information on the Allied Health programs at FDTC, visit www.fdtc.edu or contact AVP of Health Sciences Dan Averette at Dan.Averette@fdtc.edu or by calling 843-661-8161. The FDTC Health Sciences Campus is located in downtown Florence at 320 West Cheves Street.



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Dr. Kandace Bethea

MARION - Preparing all of Marion County School District’s students for adulthood requires both content knowledge and the 21st century skills necessary to maintain a learner stance throughout their life. In 2012, the American Management Association (AMA) polled U.S. executives on what skills they believe employees needed for success in the 21st century. They said future employees needed to be lifelong learners who can respond to the rapid pace of change in our world today and who possess these “Four Cs”:

critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication. In South Carolina, the “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate” serves as a basis for everything we do when it comes to teaching and learning. Based on the “Four Cs,” the profile outlines the world-class knowledge, skills, and life and career characteristics our students will need to be successful in career and life. Beginning earlier in 2019, using the “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate” as a foundation, MCSD created a taskforce, with the support from Insight Education Group, to develop a Learner-centered Framework (LCF), a practical tool to help our teachers and school leaders pinpoint and assess how students are learning and putting into practice the 21st century skills they need for their futures.

The framework includes five domains:

1. **Social Thinking:** Do all students participate responsibly in the learning community?
2. **Flexible & Accountable Thinking:** Are all students held

- individually accountable for doing the thinking in the classroom?
3. **Critical Thinking:** Do all students demonstrate that they are learning the appropriate standards for their subject and grade?
4. **Innovative Thinking:** Do all students produce an innovative product that is accountable to accurate knowledge and rigorous thinking?
5. **Real-World Thinking:** Do all students find accurate information and maintain personal privacy?

The LCF supports MCSD schools in responding to the demands our economy needs by articulating a vision of what learner-centered instruction looks like in the classroom. As author Jim Rickabaugh writes, in learner-centered classrooms, teachers are committed to helping students gain independent learning skills while taking on more ownership and responsibility. By building students’ capacity for “learning independence,” students are prepared to enter global society as a life-long learner.

In addition, LCF provides our teachers and school leaders with a common language for discussing what is valued in the learning process and what we want for student actions. This common language also facilitates coaching conversations between teachers and their coaches in order to positively impact student learning.

We’re excited about this new framework because it is an extension of a multilayer system of support designed to provide Marion’s educators with what they need to ensure our students are prepared for college and career. Research tells us that teachers and school leaders have the largest impact on student achievement, and Marion is dedicated to ensuring it has the support and growth opportunities it needs in order to make a difference in all our students’ lives.

Hiring Great Teachers & Transforming Students’ Lives

Looking to join **an amazing community of educators** who are transforming students’ lives?

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#GrowingBetterTogether

FMU PREPARES FOR ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY Submitted by FMU

Francis Marion University is turning 50. It's time to celebrate. The University has planned a series of special events to commemorate its first-half century during the 2019-2020 academic year. They include a fall festival named for founding president Dr. Doug Smith, a spring gala, a special dinner for founding faculty and staff and more.

FMU was founded by special legislative act on July 1, 1970, as Francis Marion College, a part of South Carolina's system of public colleges and universities. That followed a 14-year run as a two-year branch college of the University of South Carolina.

The University has grown and flourished in the 50 years since. It has remained true to its mission to serve the people of the Pee Dee Region, while at the same time developing programs and curriculum that serve and impact the entire state of South Carolina.

Today, more than 4,000 students matriculate in more than 40 majors at FMU. In recent years the University has created programs in the health sciences, started industrial and mechanical engineering programs, developed its first doctoral program and added a significant physical presence in downtown Florence.

FMU's main campus is located five miles west of Florence. More is on the way. Construction has begun, or will soon begin, on a new honors center, on new medical education labs and clinical space in the old post office building in downtown Florence, and on a new freshwater ecology lab and conference center on recently gifted land just north of campus.

The 50th anniversary celebration schedule will begin in October with a dinner for founding faculty and staff members, hosted by Dr. and Mrs. Fred Carter. Carter is FMU's president.

On Nov. 14, the entire FMU community will gather at the Griffin Athletic Complex on campus for "Doug's Day," a festival and concert

by South Carolina music legend Edwin McCain. McCain, a Greenville native, produced back-to-back Top 40 hits "I'll Be" and "I Could Not Ask for More" in the late 1990s. Those hits, plus others included on his 11 albums, have been part of numerous movie and TV soundtracks. Besides McCain's concert, Doug's Day will also include food on the plaza at the GAC and other entertainments. The concert and admission to the grounds for Doug's Day is free. The event is open to the public. Doug's Day honors the legacy of founding president Dr. Doug Smith. The late Dr. Smith's birthday is close to the festival date.

FMU's annual community Christmas party in early December, and its February homecoming weekend will both include special FMU themes and commemorations associated with the 50th anniversary. On April 7, the University will host a grand FMU Gala at the FMU Performing Arts Center. The event will celebrate FMU's legacy and its future. Proceeds will support FMU's First Generation Fund initiative, which provides resources to support first generation college students at FMU. More than 40 percent of FMU's most recent freshman class were first generation students. That's a typical number.

Last year, President Carter appointed a committee consisting of former and current faculty, FMU students, staff and alumni to advise the University in planning the events for the year ahead.

FMU'S BIG YEAR

50th Anniversary Celebration Highlights

Oct. 23 — Founding faculty and staff dinner

Nov. 14 — Doug's Day, featuring Edwin McCain

Feb. 1 — Homecoming Weekend

April 7 — FMU Gala for the First Generation Fund



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IT'S BEEN ANOTHER BANNER YEAR AT FMU
THANKS TO THE FACULTY, STUDENTS AND STAFF WHO MADE IT POSSIBLE

PRINCIPALS ANNOUNCED FOR BROCKINGTON AND NORTH HARTSVILLE

Submitted by Audrey Childers, DCSD Public Information Officer



Carla Watford

DARLINGTON -- The Darlington County School District (DCSD) recently announced the new principals of Brockington Elementary School and North Hartsville Elementary School. Ada Sindab, the current principal of Brunson-Dargan Elementary, will be the new principal of Brockington Elementary Magnet School in Darlington. Carla Watford, the current principal of Cain Elementary School, will be the new principal of North Hartsville Elementary School

in Hartsville.

“Both Mrs. Watford and Mrs. Sindab are experienced, successful principals and leaders in the DCSD,” said Dr. Tim Newman, superintendent of the Darlington County School District. “When looking at the needs of our children and considering the best fit for the community, it was obvious these two principals are the right choices for North Hartsville Elementary and Brockington Elementary Magnet School. I have every confidence they will continue to build on the successes of the past as well as find new paths to excellence.”

Sindab has served as the principal of Brunson-Dargan Elementary School since 2009. Before becoming principal of Brunson-Dargan, she was the Darlington County School District’s coordinator of Innovative Programs and Early Childhood Education. She served as a curriculum coordinator and a classroom teacher, and is currently the president of the Darlington County Principal and Assistant Principal Association.

Sindab holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and a Master of Education in Learning Disabilities from Francis Marion University. She also holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of South Carolina. She is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Education Program of Education Administration at the University of South Carolina. Sindab is certified in the areas of elementary and elementary principal/supervisor. She also holds endorsements in Gifted and Talented and Read to Succeed.

“This is an exciting opportunity to continue serving students and families in Darlington,” Sindab said. “Over the course of my years in the Darlington County School District, I have developed a deep respect for the staff and community of Brockington Elementary Magnet School. Together, we can continue to build on their long legacy of academic excellence. I look forward to another year of academic excellence with our family at Brunson-Dargan Elementary School before transitioning to my new role.”

Carla Watford has served as the principal of Cain Elementary School since 2009. Before taking the helm at Cain, Watford was the Darlington County School District’s Elementary English/Language Arts/Social Security coordinator. She has also been a teacher specialist on site and is a National Board Certified Middle School teacher.



Ada Sindab

Watford holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Clemson University. She holds a Master of Education in Reading Specialist from Francis Marion University. She also holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Winthrop University. She holds endorsements as Read to Succeed Literacy Teacher and Literacy Coach. In addition, Watford is certified in the areas of elementary education, reading teacher, elementary and secondary principal/supervisor (Tiers 1 and 2), as well as middle school language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

“North Hartsville Elementary School continues to provide an outstanding learning environment, as well as top-notch teaching and culture for the students in the Hartsville community,” Watford said. “I am grateful for the opportunity to work with such a skilled team of educators beginning next year and continuing to build on their foundation of excellence. At the same time, our Cain Elementary School family looks forward to an excellent year ahead of us.”

Both principals will assume their new roles at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.

DCSD HIRES LAVAN AS DIRECTOR OF ELEMENTARY ED. Submitted by Christopher McKagen, Communications Specialist



Dr. Celestine LaVan

DARLINGTON—The Darlington County School District recently hired Dr. Celestine LaVan to be the new director of elementary education. Since 2013, LaVan has served as the principal of Joseph Shanklin Elementary School in Beaufort County School District.

Dr. Tim Newman, DCSD superintendent, praised LaVan’s experience and welcomed her to the district. “Dr. LaVan’s broad experiences will benefit our district in many ways,” Newman

said. “I have seen Dr. LaVan’s expertise on display at many statewide functions, and I am excited to have her on the DCSD team.”

Before her years as principal, LaVan served as assistant principal at Joseph Shanklin Elementary and Whale Branch Elementary schools. She began her education career as a fifth grade teacher at West Hills Elementary School in 2006 before teaching fourth grade at Beaufort Elementary School. She later worked as an instructional coach at Beaufort Elementary.

“I am excited to begin this journey in Darlington County School District,” LaVan said. “Working collaboratively with an emphasis on teamwork and a ‘students first’ mindset, we will continue moving our



district in a positive direction and improve the educational outcomes for all of our students.”

LaVan holds both a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and an Educational Specialist degree in Educational Leadership from Liberty University. She also holds a Master of Arts in Education from Ashford University and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Southern Mississippi. LaVan is a veteran of the United States Navy.

The director of elementary education is responsible for assisting in building the capacity of principals to improve the conditions of teaching and learning in elementary schools while also ensuring the district’s mission and goals are achieved.





Elif Gokbel

CONWAY-Coastal Carolina University welcomed a new addition to its ever-growing faculty. Elif Gokbel, M.S. Ed., instructional designer and technologist, joined Teal Nation to help advance the growth and education of Coastal's faculty. As part of the Center for Teaching Excellence to Advance Learning, or "CeTEAL" team, Gokbel develops technology workshops focusing on both innovative technologies and effective pedagogies for

faculty and graduate students.

Gokbel moved to the United States around eight years ago and earned a master's degree in secondary math education at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa. Because of her interest in integrating technology with teaching, she enrolled in a doctoral instructional technology and leadership program at Duquesne as well. Her expertise will help the CeTEAL office create workshops for faculty that include many different practices, including some on how to approach students from different, diverse backgrounds.

"If you are talking about technology, we need to talk about how we can diversify, how we can differentiate our instructions for our students with diverse backgrounds," Gokbel said. "The language we use also impacts our students' learning. We try to promote that in our workshops with faculty."

The CeTEAL Office offers workshop sessions on teaching in a diverse classroom, addressing accessibility concerns, engaging pedagogy and other diversity-related topics.

"We are currently working with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI), and this past spring semester, both centers co-sponsored

an inclusive pedagogy workshop for faculty with Dena Samuels," Gokbel said. Samuels, an expert in the field of cultural inclusion, talked to faculty about inclusive pedagogy, which is a method of teaching that focuses on the variety of backgrounds in the classroom to create an equal space for all learners. Educating the faculty on inclusive methods will help CCU flourish as a diverse institution.

Gokbel has experience with this sort of work through work at her previous institution. "I was working with and helping international visiting scholars and students with a smooth transition in their first year of arrival in America," Gokbel said. "My background helps me contribute to the University's diversity and inclusion policy, being a person coming from a diverse background and willing to help students, faculty or anyone on campus with a diverse background."

To continue the growth of diversity and inclusion on campus, Elif Gokbel and the rest of the CeTEAL staff will be participating in Safe Zone Training this month. Upon the completion of the training, the staff will become SafeZone Allies who are committed to support the LGBTQ+ community on campus.

Elif Gokbel, along with staff members of CeTEAL and ODI, will continue to support diversity and inclusion education and initiatives as Gokbel becomes acclimated to the Coastal Carolina University family.



COASTAL Commitment



Coastal Carolina University is committed to academic excellence and instructional quality. With the primary focus of CCU faculty being high-quality teaching and engaged learning, students are encouraged to participate alongside faculty in research, scholarship, creative activity and service.

Theatre teaching associate, Amanda Masterpaul, leads CCU students in a drama-based instruction exercise for an applied theatre workshop series called the "Lighthouse Project," a semester-long collaboration between CCU's theatre students and a local youth center serving those experiencing homelessness and street life.



Marc C. David

After the Civil War, there was a great debate on what type of education was best for freed men and women. On one side of the debate was Booker T. Washington. Washington was product of slavery, but he was later freed and went on to attend Hampton University in Hampton, Va. During his later years, he became founder and president of Tuskegee University in Alabama and author of "Up from Slavery," which was a narrative of his life from slavery

to freedom.

Because of his life experiences, Washington believed that the masses of freed men and women should learn a vocational skill that would allow them to become productive citizens and earn a living for themselves and their families. Many obtained skills in wheelwrighting, carpentry, cobbling, basket making, harness making, shoe lastin, and midwifery. Washington felt that there was dignity in work and that having a vocational skill would help move freed men and women into the American mainstream.

On the other side of this debate was WEB Dubois. Dubois was the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard University. He later became a professor of sociology at Atlanta University, one of the founders of the NAACP, and author of "The Souls of Black Folk," which is a collection of essays about Black life and culture.

Unlike Washington, who thought the masses of freed men and women should cultivate a skill, Dubois felt that a certain number would cultivate the intellect. In his view, through training in the liberal arts, they would become the doctors, lawyers, preachers and teachers of the future or what affectionately became known as the "Talented Tenth."

Today, many question what type of education is best for 21st Century. However, the focus is not on freed men and women. Instead it is on ALL of our citizens. And instead of vocational training, the conversation is about technical education.

Our technical colleges currently provide the technical skills needed to compete in a global economy, the income that allows citizens to provide for themselves and their families, and the liberal arts training that can cultivate the intellect as well as a skill. Instead of the cobbling and wheelwrighting, our technical colleges offer programs in mechatronics, engineering, welding, HVAC, automotive, auto body, machine tool and industrial maintenance. Instead of midwifery, there are now programs in nursing, surgical technology, respiratory care, medical assisting, dental hygiene and radiologic technology, all of which offer a very lucrative salaries. Additionally, most of our technical degrees require at least one course in math, speech, composition and the humanities, so students are getting a more well-rounded degree than the vocational programs of the past.

For those who are interested in furthering their education, our technical colleges offer associate of arts and associate of science degrees, which are transferable to four-year college and universities in the state and provide significant savings in tuition and fees.

Because of the reputation of our Technical College System, South Carolina has attracted Volvo, BMW, Boeing, Continental Tire, Michelin, and many other industries. There are, in fact, many jobs in our state that go unfilled because we cannot train a workforce fast enough. To address that need, our state has invested in dual enrollment to move high school students into the workforce at a faster pace.

Normally, technical colleges flourish in enrollment when the economy is in a downturn and unemployment is high. But why wait

to earn a technical advantage? If you can acquire an additional credential to improve your future job prospects, or if you are underemployed and want to improve your earning potential, what better time is there than right now?

Marc C. David is Vice President for Academic Affairs at Florence-Darlington Technical College.



SNOWDEN HONORED BY TSF

Contributed by the Morning News



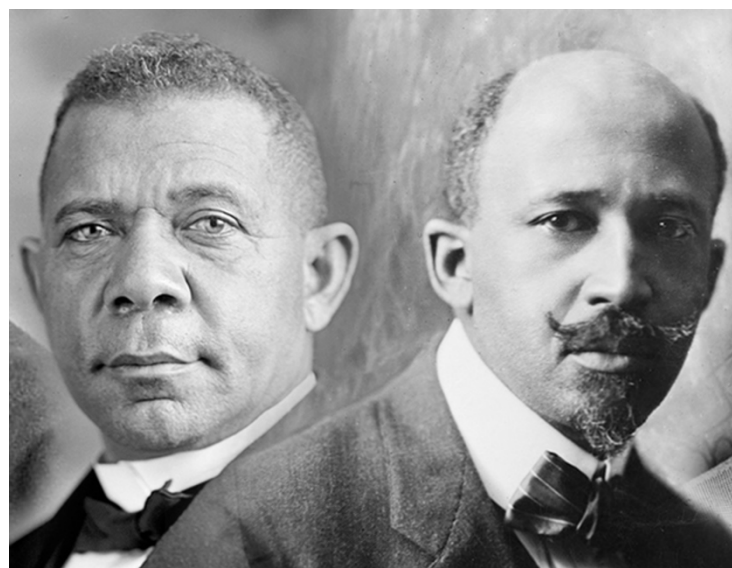
Nancy C.G. Snowden

The School Foundation will honor Nancy C.G. Snowden as the 2019 Distinguished Graduate during The School Foundation Gala. The gala will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Oct. 22 at the Southeastern Institute for Manufacturing Technology on the Florence-Darlington Technical College (FDTC) campus.

Snowden is a 1973 graduate of West Florence High School and a 1977 graduate of FDTC. Snowden is the founder and chief executive of NCGS, a contract research organization that functions as a high-level professional consultant to the health care industry. The organization, which was founded in 1984, functions as an extension to the sponsor company supporting research, identifying and managing sites, verifying data and overseeing the safety of subjects.

Before establishing NCGS, Snowden led an NIH/NCI-funded grant at the Medical College of Georgia/University Hospital, establishing one of the first community clinical oncology programs and producing one of the top enrolling initial centers.

Snowden has more than 35 years of combined clinical experience in drug, diagnostic and novel device development.



Booker T. Washington

W. E. B. DuBois



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HGTC SCHOLARSHIP FOR EXTREME HOME MAKEOVER STAR



RJ Pearl standing in front of the International Culinary Institute

CONWAY – When ABC’s Extreme Makeover: Home Edition aired in 2007, Rashaad Juwan “RJ” Pearl may have only been six years old but, he was one of four Wilson family grandchildren featured in the television show as living in his grandmother’s run-down trailer located in Longs. His grandmother, Natalie Wilson, was realizing her dream of providing a safe home with more security for her grandchildren.

What the television audience didn’t see was all of the generous support the family received from the surrounding community. As the design team was constructing their new home and changing their lives on a national stage, Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) leadership was making a pledge to change their lives in the future. It was through retired President Neyle Wilson’s decision to present each grandchild with full-tuition scholarships to attend HGTC that a different kind of makeover would happen 12 years later. RJ, a 2019 Myrtle Beach High School graduate, is working toward his own dream and studying Culinary Arts at the HGTC International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach.



RJ Pearl with his Chef Professor, Bill Twaler

He remembers the home where he lived before the makeover construction transformed their humble living conditions. Attending HGTC is something he’s been planning for years. “I have always enjoyed watching my grandmother and mother cook. It has been my goal to attend HGTC to achieve my Culinary Arts degree so I

can one day begin my career as a professional chef,” exclaimed RJ.

HGTC Chef Bill Twaler, CEC MSE is one of the master chef professors at the International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach, and RJ Pearl is having the privilege of studying in his kitchen first semester. Twaler said, “RJ is a happy, energetic student that is growing with the program and has the potential to be a great chef and restaurant owner someday.”

RJ is just getting started on his HGTC journey, but the College will cover his full-tuition, books and supplies for each semester. “HGTC is proud to support students like RJ through various scholarships and tuition assistance programs,” said Dr. Marilyn Murphy Fore, HGTC president. “This is one example of how our quality education programs are able to change the lives of students in a short period of time.”



RJ Pearl cooking with Chef Professor, Bill Twaler

Fore and the HGTC family looks forward to seeing RJ achieve his goals and make his dream a reality.

“My ultimate goal is to one day own and manage a restaurant of my own. I am grateful that HGTC would be able to provide the financial support and scholarship to make my dream possible,” continued RJ.

To find out more about HGTC programs or the HGTC International Culinary Institute of Myrtle Beach, visit the website.



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www.HGTC.edu/HR



Kaji Orr, HGTC Benefits and Performance manager (center), receives award on behalf of HGTC at the annual Benefits at Work conference in August. From left to right: Tara Lahnen, assistant HR director, HGTC; Kaji Orr, Benefits and Performance manager, HGTC; and Laura Smoak, Analytics and Health Initiatives director, PEBA

CONWAY-Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) was recently recognized as the 2019 Higher Education Winner for the PEBA Partners Health and Wellness Award to honor employers that demonstrate a dedication to promoting a physically, emotionally and financially healthier workplace.

Kaji Orr, Benefits and Performance manager at HGTC, coordinates the ongoing efforts in transforming its workforce through various programs and health initiatives. “HGTC is proud to be recognized as a top employer setting the bar for workplace well-being across the state of South Carolina,” said Orr. “We are committed to the health and wellness of faculty and staff and creating an environment that is inclusive of a healthy lifestyle.”

By providing wellness programs, HGTC strives to increase awareness and encourage participation so that employees will continue to make positive choices which have an impact on their lives at work and at home.

HGTC assistant director for Human Resources, Tara Lahnen, supervises benefits and performance management programs at the College, including the direction for the Health and Wellness program. “At HGTC, we believe wellness is a lifestyle and encompasses the well-being of the whole person. As such, we are honored to be recognized as a leader in the promotion of health and wellness for our employees,” Lahnen expressed.

A Wellness Ambassadors Program was recently implemented at HGTC, allowing interested employees to volunteer their time promoting health and wellness among faculty and staff. Wellness Ambassadors serve as liaisons between departments and human resources helping to direct employees to wellness programs, activities and resources. The new program has proven to be very effective in compelling HGTC employee participation.

Laura Smoak, Analytics and Health Initiatives director for PEBA agreed, “We were thrilled to learn about Horry-Georgetown Technical College’s Wellness Ambassadors Program and how it is driving engagement in health and wellness activities. The college does a superb job in using resources offered by PEBA, and it is having a positive impact on employees’ lives. Congratulations on a well-deserved award!”

Other programs and healthy initiatives HGTC implemented include:

- Fitness challenges (Summer Strides Walking Challenge, Holiday Fitness Challenge – Fitmas, Healthy Habits Bingo)
- Mobile mammography visit
- Lunch and Learn sessions on various topics (Mindfulness, Financial Wellness, Women’s and Men’s Health, Deskercise)
- Onsite preventative screenings
- Onsite flu shots clinics
- Employee assistance program
- Employee appreciation pamper days (chair massages and health checks)
- Bank at work programs with BB&T, First Citizens, TD Bank, Anderson Brothers Bank & South State Bank
- Annual employee benefits fair
- Monthly wellness newsletters featuring articles from PEBA’s Health Hub and healthy recipes, promotion of PEBA perks, health and wellness programs, and local community health related events
- Onsite fitness Center available for employees
- HGTC Goes Red for Heart Health in February, Pink Out Day in October

for breast cancer awareness, Mental Health Awareness in May

“We care about the physical, emotional, and financial well-being of our workforce. It’s encouraging to see the transformation of the overall health of our faculty and staff and humbling to know that our efforts are being recognized state-wide in the Higher Education category,” said Dr. Marilyn Murphy Fore, HGTC president. “We are proud that our employees are taking their health seriously and making lifestyle changes based on the Health and Wellness programs implemented especially for our College.”

For more information about HGTC Employment, visit the webpage.

FELLOWS IN EDUCATION’S FIFTH YEAR

Submitted by Debbie Hyler, executive director, The School Foundation



2019-2020 Fellows in Education participants

Now in its fifth year, the Fellows in Education program, designed to give business and community leaders a unique, behind-the-scenes look into Florence 1 schools, is preparing for an exciting year.

“We are thrilled that the Fellows in Education program is now in its fifth year,” said Debbie Hyler, executive director of The School Foundation. “Having our community leaders visit today’s classrooms allows a better understanding of how new technology is currently being used and how the students are adapting. The foundation is proud to have the opportunity to showcase the numerous grants we have funded through the years allowing additional use of that technology.”

“The Chamber is enthusiastic about working with The School Foundation and Florence 1 on this joint effort,” said Michael Miller, president of the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce. “To date, we have shared this nine-month experience with over 150 area leaders. The purpose of the program is to create a community of educational ambassadors that can share firsthand knowledge of local student proficiencies and educator experiences.”

Florence 1 Superintendent of Schools Dr. Richard O’Malley expressed his views about the program. “The Fellows program helps provide cohesive district-wide and community-wide communication and is re-energizing collaborations with our business community. I am excited about the opportunities this program provides.”

Organizers of the program say the ultimate goal of Fellows in Education is to create a large group of local leaders who will be able to collaborate with policymakers and community members in developing better education policies in the local community.

“The Chamber is proud to contribute to the development of better educational programs in the communities in which we all live and work,” further stated Miller.

An orientation meeting for the program was in September. The first of eight sessions were set to begin on October 1 with sessions to be held thereafter on the first Tuesday of each month through the month of May at various Florence 1 schools.

Members of the three-way partnership have sought after a select group of approximately 28 community and business leaders whom they believe are civic-minded supporters of the need for expansion of local educational resources.

RUIZ 4 KIDS...WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE Submitted by Ruiz Foods



Ruiz Foods began manufacturing El Monterey® frozen Mexican food in Florence in 2015 after the company purchased an existing facility on Florence Harlee Boulevard and completed extensive renovations. Since then, Ruiz Foods, which is

considered an employer of choice, has become one of the top 10 private employers in Florence County. Ruiz Foods Florence manufactures a variety of El Monterey® frozen Mexican products (burritos, breakfast burritos and taquitos) and also manufactures a wide variety of Tornados® brand roller-grill product flavors.

Established in California's Central Valley by a father and son team in 1964, the Ruiz Foods culture has long included a philosophy of giving back. "I clearly remember my dad and co-founder, Fred Ruiz, sharing his belief that 'children are our future,'" recalls Kim Ruiz Beck, chairman and a third-generation Ruiz family member. "In fact, I remember him telling me, many times that 'whether personally, or professionally, it's our responsibility to do what we can to help the children in our community. After all, they are our future leaders.' To Dad it is simple, and I'm proud to say that many of our Team Members have embraced that same simple giving philosophy."

One example of Ruiz Team Member giving and involvement is Ruiz 4 Kids, a non-profit organization created by Ruiz Foods Team Members in 1991. At the time Ruiz 4 Kids was founded, Ruiz Foods' operations were only located in California. Today, with Ruiz Foods' additional manufacturing facilities in Florence and Denison, Texas, as well, Ruiz 4 Kids has grown alongside the Ruiz Foods workforce and not only has more volunteers, but the organization also impacts many more children. Ruiz 4 Kids' motivation has remained the same: to provide opportunities that inspire hope and change in children's lives.

"Many of us who volunteer our time with Ruiz 4 Kids have been exposed to Ruiz Foods' giving philosophy for quite some time," explains Tyler Beck, Ruiz 4 Kids' president and fourth-generation Ruiz family member. "We have witnessed, firsthand the philanthropic spirit...the care for the community...demonstrated by Ruiz Foods' co-founder, my grandfather, Fred Ruiz, as well as Ruiz Foods' chairman, my mom, Kim Ruiz Beck, and other members of the Ruiz family. Volunteering with Ruiz 4 Kids allows us to better understand just exactly how important it is to embrace this philosophy and the impact it has on the young people of our community."

And this spirit of giving...this commitment to community...also has an impact on the people it draws to Ruiz Foods.

"I can remember when I was interviewing and considering joining Ruiz Foods," shares Pete Mayadag, Florence Ruiz Foods operations manager, "I was very pleased to learn that Ruiz Team Members had created an organization geared to helping children in the communities where Ruiz Team Members live and work. As a Ruiz 4 Kids volunteer, it's great to be a part of that commitment and that willingness...that eagerness...to give back."



Florence Ruiz 4 Kids Volunteer Shanda Blackwell with Keishan Scott from Lee Central High School

Ruiz 4 Kids offers two programs supporting educational initiatives for youth: scholarships and a Mini-Grants for Teachers Program. First, the Louis F. Ruiz Scholarship Program—named in honor of Fred's father, Louis, and co-founder of Ruiz Foods—has awarded over \$4 million in scholarships since its inception in 1991 to graduating high school seniors entering their first year of college. In 2017, Ruiz 4 Kids added a scholarship program specific to community college students transferring to an accredited four-year college/university. Sponsors of the annual Louis F. Ruiz Golf Invitational, which includes Ruiz Foods' vendors, suppliers, Team Members and community supporters, provide funding for the scholarship program.

"Ruiz Foods came to Florence, South Carolina, in 2014," said Tommy Pruitt, Florence human resources manager, "and it didn't take long for us to have Team Members interested in volunteering for Ruiz 4 Kids. It's a real testament to our Team Members and their interest in being involved and giving back to the community."

The first Ruiz 4 Kids scholarship to a Florence high school student was awarded in 2015. Since then, \$166,000 in scholarships has been awarded to Florence-area students. In fact, last year alone, \$61,000 in scholarships was awarded to either graduating high school seniors or transferring community college students throughout the Florence



Photo was taken during the session "Engaging Math Minds in 2nd Grade" by teacher Laura Forehand at Royall Elementary School.

area. "It's exciting to be a part of this growing program," adds Pruitt, "and it's a pleasure to see how many Florence Team Members are glad—even anxious—to volunteer their time to be present during high school graduation ceremonies when Ruiz 4 Kids scholarships recipients are announced."

The second Ruiz 4 Kids program administered by Ruiz 4 Kids is the Mini-Grants for Teachers program, which began in California in 2013. Ruiz 4 Kids, with the support of Ruiz Foods' Team Members in Denison, extended the program to Texas in 2014 and extended it again to Florence with the support of Florence Ruiz Foods Team Members in 2015.

What is unique about the Mini-Grants for Teachers program is that the monies used for the grants are all Team Member donations. In other words, the dollars Florence Team Members donate to the program are awarded only to teachers in the Florence area. "And when you look historically on the dollars our Florence Team Members give to this program," adds Mayadag, "you can see how important they feel this program is."

The first year Florence adopted the Mini-Grants for Teachers Program, Team Members gave \$4,500. Four years later, Florence-area teachers received over \$19,000 in Teacher Mini-Grants, thanks to the support of Ruiz Florence Team Members. "What's doubly exciting about this program," adds Pruitt, "is that none of the monies are used for administrative fees of any kind. What Team Members give is exactly what is awarded to area teachers."

"Ruiz 4 Kids provides an opportunity for each one of us to have a positive impact," adds Mayadag. "In fact, there's a phrase used at Ruiz Foods that sums it up perfectly: 'I Make A Difference!'"



From far left, front to back: Tammy Cantey, HR generalist; Jon Holder, EHS manager; Pete Mayadag, director of operations; and Kenneth Krieger, inventory control analyst. Middle row, front to back: Courtney Driggers, cost accountant; Tommy Pruitt, HR manager; and Stacey Daniel, HR assistant. Far right, front to back: Renee Robinson, transportation coordinator, and Krista Meekins, administrative assistant & community relations



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BREAST CANCER A W A R E N E S S

FIGHT LIKE A GIRL! *by Adalia Ellis*



Peggy Powell

JOHNSONVILLE-A woman is diagnosed with breast cancer every two minutes, reports the National Breast Cancer Foundation. Peggy Powell is one of those women, and for breast cancer awareness month, she of intuition, strength, fight, faith and love is an inspiration.

Between a breast self exam and intuition, Powell knew something was wrong. She had tenderness on the left side of her breast. She felt that something could be wrong but then

reconsidered because she had recently had a physical, and her doctor hadn't said anything.

"I cannot describe the feeling, but I knew deep down something wasn't right. My mammogram was coming due, and I was really nervous for some reason. I really didn't know why I was so nervous. I kept telling my husband something is not right."

Following the mammogram, Powell had a lumpectomy, which tested positive for cancer in her lymph nodes. She was scared, mad and worried. She thought that this could not be happening to her. Her career was at its peak. She had plans for the future, and cancer was not a part of the plan. She was healthy and breast cancer wasn't something that she thought would be a part of her life. She always thought her faith was strong, but at the time she didn't think she passed the test of faith. She didn't feel ready to walk the journey called "Breast Cancer."

"Just hearing the word 'cancer' is enough to rock anyone's world, but when you are the one that is being told you have cancer, I cannot describe the feelings of emotion. There are so many things that are running through your mind you cannot make sense of anything. I think the unknowing, not being in control, makes you scared, mad and worried all at the same time. I ask myself why me? Then I turn around and tell myself, "Why not me?" You try to come up with a reason to help you handle the 'C' word, but there is no reason."

The treatment for her cancer was aggressive. She took eight rounds of chemo in four cycles and 30 rounds of radiation and now takes a chemo tablet daily.

Powell's husband, Robert, was her rock during this time. His mother had had breast cancer, and so he knew that sometimes the end results were not what anyone was hoping for. He kept telling her that they would fight until the end. And it was the little things, such as

always making sure that she had homemade mashed potatoes to eat, that made things bearable. Sometimes she would wake up during the night, and Robert would have her hand in his and would be praying. "I'm thankful I had people praying for me when I couldn't pray for myself." Powell's family was scared and worried but knew that they would get through the ordeal of cancer together.

On the bad days, she met each challenge with the conviction not to give in. She decided to keep going and to focus on the positive. She took care of herself by eating and drinking whatever she wanted, even if it was a little bit, and resting when she needed to rest. Believing that God doesn't give anyone more than they can handle, she kept her trust and faith in God.

When considering what she learned about herself and others while fighting cancer, Powell spoke of always feeling like she was a strong, independent person. That she could handle anything that came her way. It didn't take long for her to learn that it's okay to be scared and to depend on others.



"During this time my family and my church were my rock that I leaned upon. Robert was the best caregiver and always by my side. On chemo day my co-workers would dress in pink, crazy clothes and send me pictures. The morning of chemo, Jennifer would send me a Bible verse and words of encouragement. This doesn't even touch the people that made a difference in my journey!"

Powell's story shows us how important it is to be proactive about paying attention to our bodies and listening to our intuition. For anyone who has been diagnosed with cancer or is going through treatment, she encourages putting your faith and trust in God. Join a good support group. She and her husband joined Toni's Tigers and not only learned so much from the group but also had support.

"And remember, when you look in the mirror and you have no hair be proud, your baldness represents ladies that have lost their lives to breast cancer, ladies that have survived breast cancer and ladies that are fighting the battle. We are a member of an elite group. Ladies that fight like a girl to win the battle against breast cancer."



WE'RE PART OF THE
FIGHT
BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

BREAST CANCER A W A R E N E S S

IT IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH....



Emmanuel Quaye, MD
Medical Director

...AND THERE'S ONE NEW THING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BREAST CANCER: PROBIOTICS!

The lifetime risk for breast cancer among women is one in eight. That means one out of eight women will have breast cancer in their lifetime. That is a significant lifetime risk. Because so many women get it, breast cancer is quite reasonably a topic that generates a bit of discussion and interest in research and funding. Because of this same high risk, many

women make the decision to have prophylactic mastectomies to avoid getting the disease. This is especially true for women who have a family history, or a proven genetic risk for breast cancer. But if current research findings on possible causes and prevention are held to be true, the outlook for breast cancer will change for the better.

Breast cancer is quite an enigmatic disease. Despite the strong focus on genetics, less than 1 in 10 of all breast cancers are due to genetics. The vast majority of breast cancers have no genetic connection. That means most breast cancers are due to environmental factors, which if identified, we might be able to influence to reduce the risk. Age and diet are risk factors for breast cancer, but we do not know the cause of breast cancer in about 70% of people who get it. These cancers with no known cause are called sporadic cancers, and they represent an area that is ripe for research.



There are billions of bacteria that inhabit our bodies and interact with our bodies and known collectively as the microbiome. The person on whose body they inhabit is the host. The microbiome interacts with the host through the collective DNA of all the bacteria, and the byproducts of bacterial metabolism. The interaction between the microbiome and the host is

symbiotic, and results in benefit for both the host and microbiome. Sometimes, the relationship turns sour, and the interaction between host and microbiome could lead to disease. There are some real disease-causing bacteria mixed with friendly bacteria. What really makes the microbiome safe and beneficial is the proportions of individual species of bacteria (and yeast) that exist in the host. The types and proportions of bacteria in a specific host is the host's bacterial profile. Different bacterial profiles can exist in different parts of the host, such as the upper airway and sinuses, the gut, and yes, the breasts.

Since these bacteria were first described about 150 years ago, researchers have been growing the knowledge base on how they influence human health. It has already been established that changes in the microbiome plays a role in human diseases such as obesity, diabetes and colon cancer. In the last several years, research has intensified on the role that bacterial populations play in human health and various diseases, including breast cancer. In 2016, researchers from Ontario, Canada, reported their findings on the role of the bacterial profile in the breast tissue of women on the development of breast cancer, benign tumors of the breast, or no breast disease. In this study, the researchers collected breast tissue from women undergoing surgery. The women were in three


groups. The first group consisted of women who had breast cancer. The second group, of women had benign tumors, and the third group consisted of women who had no disease of the breast, but were having cosmetic surgery (breast enhancement or reduction). For the women who had cancers or benign tumors, the researchers collected samples from the normal tissue close to the tumors.

The results showed the presence certain bacteria, in the tissues collected from women with breast cancer, which are known to cause DNA damage, a necessary first step in the development of cancer. These were E. coli (certain strains) and Staphylococcus epidermidis. One the other hand, women who had no breast disease were found to have higher numbers of Lactobacillus and Streptococcus, two bacteria, which have been shown to protect against cancer. This was not surprising because similar results have been shown in people with colon cancer (stool) as well as oral cancers (saliva). In addition, "orally administered Lactobacillus species have been shown to be protective in animal models of breast cancer."

Interesting stuff, isn't it? First, the researchers have shown that there are bacteria in some parts of the body (breasts) where we wouldn't think bacteria exist. And then they have shown that not all the bacteria automatically cause disease. Other research has shown that some bacteria actually protect against disease. In their conclusion, the authors note that their study "raises important questions as to the role of the breast microbiota in breast cancer development or prevention, and whether bacteria could be harnessed for interventions to help prevent disease onset."

What does that mean to a patient who may be worried about getting breast cancer?

Although the research is not conclusive at this time, the findings are exciting. Since Probiotics (beneficial bacteria) were discovered 150 years ago, scientists have known that they play a role in wellness and health promotion. Populations where people consume large amounts of fermented foods such as yogurt, which contain Probiotics, have been shown to live long. Moreover, an imbalance of bacteria, known as dysbiosis, has been shown to play a role in most chronic diseases from mental disorders, heart disease, neurologic diseases and autoimmune disease. And as we mentioned earlier, disease causing bacteria (rather than disease preventing and health promoting bacteria) have been found in stool of colon cancer patients and in saliva of oral cancer patients.



Probiotic benefits

Some of the many health benefits accredited to dietary consumption of probiotic cultures include:

- ▶ Enhanced gut function and stability
- ▶ Improved protection against infection and cancers/mutagens
- ▶ Immune system up-regulation
- ▶ Alleviated lactose intolerance
- ▶ Improved digestion and nutrient absorption
- ▶ Reduced blood cholesterol
- ▶ Reduced allergy risk

For people with concerns about breast cancer, the message is "Probiotics!" Yes Probiotics. If you have never heard about Probiotics start now with this article, ask your doctor, search for it on the internet, and ask your local health food store for information. You are also at liberty to call our office. If you

know about Probiotics, and you want more information, you may call our office. The information about the benefits of Probiotics is extensive, and Probiotics should be included as part of any health plan. We recommend Probiotics because Probiotics have been shown to have a positive impact on longevity AND prevent breast cancer in animal models of the disease, AND Probiotics are safe. Wishing you good breast health, Emmanuel Quaye, MD, Medical Director Magnolia Health Care, Inc.

BREAST CANCER A W A R E N E S S

WHEN FAITH MADE THE DIFFERENCE

Articles by Ta'Meeka Epps



Shirlene Blanton

“My walk through breast cancer was a difficult one as it with all women who suffer with this diagnosis, but because of my salvation and having given my life and heart to the Lord almost one year prior to this, made all the difference in the world with how I handled this diagnosis that was given to me.”

About one in eight U.S. women (about 12 percent) will develop invasive breast cancer over the course of their lifetime. In

2019, 268,600 new cases of invasive breast cancer are expected to be diagnosed in women in the U.S. alone (Retrieved from www.breastcancer.org/symptoms/understand_bc/statistics).

Invasive breast cancer starts in the breast ducts or glands but grows into breast tissue. It can then spread into the nearby lymph nodes and could potentially spread to nearby glands or tissue. The diagnosis Blanton was given by her doctor was Stage 1 infiltrating ductal carcinoma, the most common type of breast cancer in women and men.

Shirlene Blanton, a native of Manning, moved to Florence in 1994. On August 26, 1996, at 33 years old with a six-year-old daughter needing her, Blanton had to prepare for what was to come in her future. While getting ready for her workday, she found a lump while performing a routine self exam. An appointment was made with her doctor, and she was scheduled for a mammogram. She was informed the mammogram came back as “non-cancerous,” but her mom was there by her side and told the doctor that it didn’t matter what the report said, that whatever it was, it didn’t need to be there.

An ultrasound was scheduled, which revealed something different than the mammogram. Five days later, Blanton was seen by a surgeon, Dr. Ed Lee, of what was then known as McLeod Hospital, and the very next day she was scheduled for a biopsy.

The team decided to remove the mass. However, Dr. Lee was concerned he was unable to remove all of the cancerous cells, and there was a possibility she would have to undergo a mastectomy. Blanton’s oncologist, Dr. Michael Pavy, confirmed the pathology report, which showed cancer cells were still present around the edges of the area the where the mass was removed.



Shirlene Blanton at Billy Graham Library

For Blanton, it seemed as if, as soon as she was released from the hospital and into the care of her family, she was admitted right back into the hospital to undergo a modified radical mastectomy. The procedure involved the removal of the breast tissue and eight lymph nodes of the axilla.

After her mastectomy, Blanton started the next phase of her journey--chemotherapy--which was a sickness and a life-altering

event entirely different than the diagnosis and prognosis of breast cancer.

Blanton owes her survival to her faith in God; her parents, who never left her side; her daughter; the most amazing church family, Florence Baptist Temple; her work family; Kathy Maddy, a very special friend; and the team of doctors, surgeons and hospital staff.

Shirlene Blanton has been cancer free for 23 years with two beautiful daughters, by the grace of God. She has the following message for anyone who may travel a road similar to the one she traveled: “Keep your thoughts positive, and never give up hope or stop believing in HIS word.” As Philippians 4:13 states, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

HOW SELF-EXAMS AND FAITH HELPED



Deloris Brand and husband Johnny

EFFINGHAM-Non-cancerous (benign) changes in breast tissue are sometimes called “fibrocystic changes” and used to be called “fibrocystic disease.” Many breast lumps are diagnosed as fibrosis and/or cysts. These changes in breast tissue affect many women at some point in their lives.

Women of child-bearing age are commonly affected by fibrosis and cysts. However, women of all ages run the risk of being affected. Fibroids and cysts may affect different parts of the breast or be found in both breasts concurrently.

Fibrosis refers to a large amount of fibrous tissue, the same tissue that ligaments and scar tissue are made of. Areas of fibrosis feel rubbery, firm or hard to the touch. Cysts are fluid-filled, round or oval sacs within the breasts. They are often felt as a round, movable lump, which might also be tender to the touch.

Deloris Brand had her first surgery to remove a fibrosis cyst in 1992. “It was one surgery after another. They would remove one cyst, and another would return, but every time the test came back negative. I would have a mammogram, and it wouldn’t detect any abnormalities. During one of my routine self checks, I found a lump.”

Those words were spoken by a survivor, and during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month her survival story is the feel-good story that needs to be heard because women can survive breast cancer if it is found and treated early.

Brand went for her six-month check-up with the late Dr. Ed Lee, of the former McLeod Hospital System, a week after discovering the lump. A mammogram was ordered after closely examining the images, and Lee saw no reason for concern. Brand suggested Lee have a look at the lump she discovered, and he confirmed the mass was not showing on the mammogram. He scheduled her for surgery later in the week to remove the cyst, and when the results came back they were positive.

Brand recalls the moments leading up to her diagnosis. “Dr. Lee called me in, and with tears in his eyes he told me the bridge we had always talked about was imminent, and together we would have to make it across. I knew I was in the hands of the Lord and was prepared for the fight.”

On October 4, 2006, which was a week later, she was diagnosed with cancer and had her right breast removed. She was served at the

BREAST CANCER A W A R E N E S S

HOW SELF-EXAMS CONT'D



Deloris Brand and her two sons, Johnny and Demetrius

Cancer Center, where her oncologist was Dr. Rao. During chemotherapy, Brand said she was most grateful for her husband, Johnny, and for all he did as her friend and caregiver, ensuring she did not fall into depression. “He would always tell me, “You can beat this, and you will beat this.”” Brand’s two sons, Johnny and Demetrius; her daughter-in-laws, Seneca and Valencia; and her grandchildren were her reasons to fight with every ounce of faith

she possessed. Brand has now been cancer free for 15 years. Prior to discovering the lump, there were no symptoms, signs or warnings of cancer. Routine self-exams were the key to early detection that allowed her team of doctors to act quickly and effectively.

Brand calls Effingham home and knows prayer changes things. She wants every woman who has to face this battle to know that “if you put God first and wait on the Lord while being of good courage, he will strengthen thine heart.”

Deloris Brand is living each day as if it is her last, and she is a living witness that God is able.

PICP CELEBRATES 10 YEARS



Imagine being diagnosed with cancer, going through chemotherapy, and then getting sidelined by an infection.

Unfortunately for people with cancer, this is a serious potential side effect of chemotherapy. Each year, more than half a million people with cancer are treated with chemotherapy, which may

weaken their immune system (a condition known as neutropenia), making them more vulnerable to getting an infection. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an infection linked to neutropenia is one of the most dangerous side effects of chemotherapy that can put a patient in the hospital, delay their treatments or even cause death. That’s why back in 2009, CDC and the CDC Foundation, with financial support from Amgen Oncology, set out to develop innovative ways to educate people about this side effect and steps they can take to reduce their risk of infections during chemotherapy.

The Preventing Infections in Cancer Patients (PICP) program is now celebrating its 10-year anniversary, and continues to provide evidence-based resources for patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals. To celebrate this milestone, the program has developed its first-ever public service announcement (PSA) highlighting the importance of infection prevention during chemotherapy and tips on how people with cancer can lower their infection risk.

“The CDC Foundation is honored to have been part of this program

that has helped educate and inform cancer patients about their increased risk of an infection during chemotherapy since 2009,” said Dr. Judith Monroe, president and CEO of the CDC Foundation. “The PICP program has been strengthened over time as a result of our strong and lasting partnerships that allow these innovative tools to be disseminated to patients.”

“These resources are working,” said Dr. Lisa Richardson, MPH, director of CDC’s Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. “By providing patients and oncology providers with simple, evidence-based materials, cancer patients and caregivers report that they understand their risk for neutropenia and infection better after visiting our website.”

As part of the program’s evolution, PICP recently launched new educational tools using virtual human technology: Talking about Infection and Neutropenia Awareness (TINA). Housed in a free mobile app and on PreventCancerInfections.org, our fully animated virtual provider TINA is an interactive tool for patients and providers. For patients, TINA will ask and answer the user’s questions about infection risk and the steps they can take to protect themselves. For oncology providers, TINA allows the user to role-play and practice a conversation with an emotionally responsive and interactive virtual patient. This training tool was developed to help providers improve their conversations with patients about a topic that can be difficult to explain.

The PICP program is also available in Spanish, including a Spanish-language version of TINA (TINA en Español). One in three Hispanic men and women are diagnosed with cancer each year, yet there are few Spanish-language resources available, according to the American Cancer Society. Based on the fundamental belief that every person should have information tailored to their needs, 3 Pasos Para Prevenir infecciones durante el tratamiento del cancer was launched to meet the needs of the Spanish-speaking community.

“An infection during chemotherapy is serious, yet many cancer patients are not aware of what they can do to lower that risk,” said Dr. Darryl Sleep, senior vice president, Global Medical and Chief Medical Officer at Amgen. “I couldn’t be prouder of the work we’ve done with CDC and the CDC Foundation over the past 10 years to provide evidence-based, educational resources to patients and their families.”

For more information about PICP and its English and Spanish resources available for patients, caregivers and providers, visit <https://www.preventcancerinfections.org/>. TINA and TINA en Español are also available online or as a free mobile app.





Pink FOR **OCTOBER**

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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STOMACH CANCER SURVIVOR GIVES GLORY TO GOD *by Adalia Ellis*



Patricia Nero

November is Stomach Cancer Awareness Month, so it is fitting to share the story of someone who is a stomach cancer survivor. Her story is one of surrender, love, perseverance and unswerving faith.

Patricia Nero, a retired educator was diagnosed with adenocarcinoma of the stomach (stomach cancer) in December 2014. Her story begins with knowing something was wrong when, for about two weeks, she was experiencing what she thought was

indigestion or heartburn. She became so uncomfortable that she finally made an appointment with her gastroenterologist.

“When I was finally seen, my doctor performed a test (EGD) and found that I had a huge hard mass in my stomach. My gastroenterologist, Dr. Timothy Spurling, decided to have a biopsy of the mass taken, which came back negative for cancer.”

Nero was experiencing very little pain, and so the dull aches she was experiencing caused her very little concern. However, because the mass was so unusual, Spurling decided to have another biopsy done. “I received a call in December informing me that the doctor wanted me to come in to see him. I was given the choice of going that day or the very next day. I chose to go on the day I received the call. Immediately, I felt God’s presence, preparing me for something that thought I could not handle and never thought I would experience: being diagnosed with cancer. I arrived for my appointment, along with my husband. When the doctor came in, he told me what I already felt, “You have cancer.”

Nero felt no fear, no worries, just the Holy Spirit letting her know that everything is going to be all right. He told her that he was going to send her to the best surgeon, and he did--Dr. John Sonfield. Nero’s treatment was a very aggressive form of chemotherapy every other week, then radiation and additional chemotherapy through a pump at the same time.

“On the day of my first chemotherapy treatment, I was excited and felt like a kid preparing for the first day of school with my clothes laid out the night before and my lunch bag packed as I was ready for this to begin and be over.”

Initially, Nero did not get sick from the treatments, but as the treatment progressed, she started feeling very sick. She was scheduled

to take eight treatments. However, after the sixth one, she was too sick to continue, so she was scanned to see if the treatments were working. “Thanks be to God,” says Nero, “I did not have to take chemotherapy every other week anymore as the treatments had done their job. Then, I was only on the radiation and the chemotherapy pump.”

Her family was by her side the entire time. If they were upset, worried or afraid, she does not know. What she does know is that they all had faith and did a fantastic job of making sure that she knew that they were alright. “My entire family, as well as many of my friends were very supportive in many ways. I know that many were praying for me and, for that, I continue to be grateful. My mother basically moved in with my husband and me during my recovery at home, which allowed my husband to continue to work and still enjoy some of his outdoor activities. Our daughter...was there every step of the way.”

In response to this new challenge in her life, Nero experienced a shift in her habits and how she approached life. She says she is a stickler for things being done correctly--all T’s crossed and I’s dotted and things being taken care of in a timely manner. Now, how would these things occur?

“I am my mother’s only daughter, and we are pretty much ‘joined at the hip,’ so much so, that when one is seen without the other, people often ask, ‘Where is your sidekick?’ My husband of 38 years now, whom I know loves me dearly and I love him, is a hard worker and loves the outdoors. Our loving, beautiful and intelligent adult daughter, who lives about an hour away, was in her first year at a new job.”

Nero thought of these people immediately when she was diagnosed. Her first concerns were all questions that speak deeply to the role she plays in the lives of those closest to her. How was her mother going to deal with her daughter’s illness? Who was going to take her mother to her appointments or to the mall and out to eat while her daughter was mending? How was her husband going to handle this with his busy schedule? Would their daughter be able to arrange a schedule to be at home without jeopardizing her job?

“There was definitely a shift in my thought processes, and my habits did shift because I could not do the things I did while recuperating. I already knew that everything would be handled but did not want it to be a burden to anyone. I made lists of what and when things were due and where things were located to make things easier. Through it all, everything worked out just fine, to God be the Glory.”

Through her illness, Nero learned that she doesn’t have to be superwoman--that things will work out and they did for her. Things may not have gotten done the way she would do them, but what’s important is that they got done.

As a stomach cancer survivor, “Nero would say to someone who has just found out they have cancer or is in the midst of treatment, Give all your worries, if any, to God and trust that He will take care of you as He has done for me, and please, please, please, let others take care of you. You do not have to be superwoman or superman.”

November is
STOMACH CANCER AWARENESS MONTH®

Stomach Cancer is the fourth most common cancer and the second leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide

What will you do to raise awareness?

Stomach Cancer Awareness Month® is a registered trademark of No Stomach For Cancer®



MY EXPERIENCE WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE Articles submitted by The Naomi Project



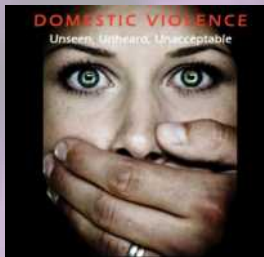
I never thought I was going through domestic violence because it didn't look the same as it did when I was younger. In my eyes, domestic violence was open-handed slaps and closed-fist punches, throwing you around the room and calling you real foul names while you

guarded your face and body from getting really hurt. This is what I knew to be domestic violence.

When I got older, and I started to fight with my boyfriend, he didn't do all those things that were done to my mother. So in my eyes, I wasn't being abused. But being with him, I sure felt like he was doing me wrong, and I wasn't happy. He would take away money if I didn't

listen to him. He would push loved ones away from me and isolate me from the world. He would threaten to hurt me and anyone else if I left him. I started to feel miserable, and my children noticed I was hurting inside. I realized I had developed a domestic situation that I thought I would never be in, and it wasn't all the normal things that I was used to seeing. I was in denial that I was being abused by someone who said they really loved me. Of course, since I wasn't this timid or fragile girl that wouldn't fight back, I thought it was mutual combat. But that was my way of not dealing with the fact that I had become my mother, after all. I had always promised myself I would never let anyone do those things to me. As much as I had to put in time and love into this relationship, I knew I had to leave it so I could live my life the way it was meant to be: happy and free. And I no longer allow abuse in any form because I love myself first. I am blessed and worthy of a healthy and productive relationship.

DOMESTIC ABUSE & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE DIFFERENCE?



1. Domestic Abuse tends to happen more often and becomes more serious and severe.
2. Domestic Violence is a pattern of abusive behavior that includes sexual, emotional and financial abuse.

I have experienced both through my mother, strangers and my ex-husband. I remember when I was five years old, and everyone was in bed. We always had to be

in bed at midnight. Mom woke me up and said, "Wake up. You did something yesterday that I forgot to punish you about." She drug me out of bed, opened the door in the wee hour of the morning, and told me to stay out there until morning. It was cold, and I was shivering during that time because lots of people were talking about "the killer." They referred to him as "THE BABY FACE MAN."

That night I was on the step I cried, hollered and banged on the door so hard. I was hoping my dad would come to my rescue, but instead, my mother came with a wide leather belt in her hand. She came down the steps and began beating me until there were bloody marks on my arm and legs. Dad finally came to the door and got the belt from my mom. He told me to go back inside the house. They began to argue but as always, Dad gave up, and she began to beat me more. After that she told me to go to bed. The best part of going into the house was knowing that I was not outside scare to death of "THE BABY FACE MAN." My little body ached so badly that night. I cried myself to sleep.

The sexual violence began when my parents left my sister and me with people who were my mom's cousins. Dad and Mom loved to go to this nightclub until 2 a.m. on Saturday night. My mom stated to my sister and me, "The nightclub is not a place for kids." They proceeded to take us to her cousin's house, and there were about eight people living in the same house. Their mother was single and decided to go along with my parents. I was six, and my sister was five. There were two women. I found out later, the one who pulled me into another room was 17 years old, and the one with my sister was 18 years old. The 17-year-old began to touch me in areas that I know as a 6-year-old I was not supposed to touch. She said if I did not do what she said, then she would

tell my mother I was bad, and I knew exactly what was going to happen. I remember crying so hard and begging her to stop. She did. After that she carried me in the kitchen to make some flapjacks. The same thing also happened to my sister. Her eyes were red from crying. We both ate our flapjacks in tears. After that we were sent to bed.

Mom and Dad came to get us in the wee hour of the morning, and on the way home, Mom stated we were going back there the next night, which was on a Sunday. My sister and I looked at each other. I remembered I whispered to her, "I am going to tell." So she agreed. The next day was Sunday. I told my father we do not want to stay with these people because they did bad things to us. He said, "What kind of bad things?" I said, "Touching us." I remember crying. He called Mom, and she said, "What's wrong?" He told her that her cousins were doing bad things to us. She began to put doubts in my dad's head and stated, "Can't you get it? She's making up lies so she can go along with us." As I began to speak, Mom said, "Don't say another word. You're staying." The same thing happened again that night to my sister and me. Still today I remember that.

I have experienced so much domestic violence in my lifetime, and I thank God every day for giving me a peaceful place to lay my head. At 17 years old, I got married to a man who became my husband. He was 20 years old when we got married. We dated for a year. The first five years of 28 years of marriage were great. After that, the signs of abuse started with the controlling Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. He wanted me to believe there was something wrong with me--that I was crazy when he used me for a punching bag and tried to manipulate me to think I was.

He had promised us a great future together but delivered a nightmare. When he would come home from work, he'd check the ground for car tires and rush into the house, in my face, asking who came to the home today. I stated, in fear, "The insurance man," and I knew what was coming next. He pushed me into a locked bedroom, smothering me with the pillow, choked me and put his rifle to my head. My five-year-old daughter would hit on the door, screaming, and my son would go into the room and lock his door. After that, he would leave and come back late at night with a gift saying he was sorry. I just stayed in the

Domestic Violence Awareness



DOMESTIC ABUSE CONT'D

room, tending to my injuries. As I am writing about this, I'm thinking back on so many women who I know are sleeping in their grave today because of promises made to them from their abuser. I thank God each day for deliverance.

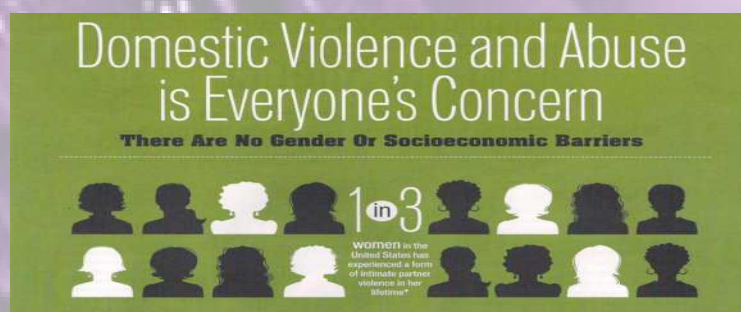
Living with someone who people think is a great man and who takes good care of his family is hard. He was a great family man who did take great care of his responsibilities. But there was horrible domestic abuse and domestic violence. We were separated numerous times. Each time it got better for about two weeks. I noticed each time he would start with the look, anger and rage, trying to start some type of argument. But there is so much more of the violent abuse that went on in my life.

The last straw for me was when he fought me so bad one night in 1999. After that, he put me in the closet and held his body to the door where I could not get out. I screamed so loud. Each time I screamed he opened the door to hit me in my head and stated each time I scream he's going to hit me again. I stopped screaming but trembled and begged for him to please let me out. Finally he did. He then went to his room, and I stayed in my daughter's room. My kids were in the military during this last incident. I could hear him snoring in the room. I began to talk to God. I heard a small deep voice say, "IT'S TIME. IT'S TIME. LEAVE."

He left to go to work the next morning. Thirty minutes later, he called me from his job to ask what I was doing and to say he was sorry and that

it would never happen again. Then he said to be ready when he got home from work because he wanted to take me to a movie and dinner. I said, "Okay. I will be ready." He asked if I will forgive him, and I paused but then said, "Yes, I do." He said, "Can I have a kiss?" I said, "Sure," and he blew me a kiss over the phone, and I did it back to him. He said, "Be ready now." I said, "I will." With my hands trembling, I began to get my suitcase and packed a few clothes and drove as fast as I could to a city... I NEVER LOOKED BACK...

But thank God I do not look like what I have been through. Now I have been divorced for 18 years. No more hurt, pain, depression and sadness. I first thank God for a lady called Debra and lastly for a place called TNP. NOW I CAN BREATHE. ~Author Unknown



THE ONES LEFT BEHIND *by Jennifer Robinson*



Kristina Burroughs

CONWAY-How do you help someone you love when you don't know they need help? This is how Frankie Burroughs felt following the murder of her daughter, Kristina Burroughs, in October of 2016. Frankie Burroughs stated there were no signs to indicate that Kristina was being abused.

According to thehotline.org, common signs of domestic abuse are:

- Their partner puts them down in front of other people

- They are constantly worried about making their partner angry
- They make excuses for their partner's behavior
- Their partner is extremely jealous or possessive
- They have unexplained marks or injuries
- They've stopped spending time with friends and family
- They are depressed or anxious, or you notice changes in their personality

Kristina Burroughs (40) and her two nieces, Justice Burroughs and Katylin Bellamy, were allegedly killed by her boyfriend, who died by suicide in Conway. Frankie said there had been some rumors of abuse, but she did not witness any strange behaviors or see any physical bruises that may have indicated Kristina was in danger. Frankie Burroughs said Kristina was a very nice woman and didn't bother anyone. Kristina regularly attended church and went to work but spent most of her time at home. Kristina is survived by her daughter, who ran to get help when her mother was being shot.

Today, though Kristina's daughter is thriving in many ways, she continues to struggle with her mother's murder and has difficulty returning to the area where the incident occurred. She is getting counseling to better cope with the incident.

Frankie Burroughs said that since Kristina's untimely death, she

says she finds it difficult getting through each day. She states, "There is not a day that goes by that I don't think about her." When she was asked about raising awareness against domestic violence, she stated she hasn't thought about it much because attending awareness events created triggers and memories regarding how her daughter died. She did say the incident has made her want to be involved in getting tougher laws against gun usage.

"Firearm access helps to fuel domestic violence. An abuser's access to a firearm is a serious threat to victims, making it five times more likely that a woman will be killed. Domestic violence assaults involving a gun are 12 times more likely to result in death than those involving other weapons or bodily force" (lawcenter.giffords.org).

Frankie, Kristina's daughter, and the lives of the remaining Burroughs family were changed that tragic night in 2016. Secondary or "other" victims of abuse are often left without care to heal the trauma they experienced by losing loved ones. Following the abuse or death of loved ones, "other" victims are left to care for children or significant others. They are not only affected by the loss of their loved one, but engaging with law enforcement, coroners, lawyers and other criminal investigation activity can also be daunting and emotionally taxing. In South Carolina, 40 intimate partners (29 women and 11 men) were murdered as a result of domestic violence in 2017 (South Carolina Attorney General's "Silent Witness," 2018). This means that too many families in South Carolina have been devastated by the tragic losses of their loved ones.

There are resources statewide to assist victims and their families when abuse is suspected.

www.sccadvasa.org

www.police.horrycounty.org

And in all cases of emergency, please call 911.

This article is dedicated to Kristina Burroughs.

Domestic Violence Awareness



MI AMORE, MY PRISONER *by De'Angela Haynes*



Most of us are familiar with the stories of some women who want to be rescued by their knight in shining armor. A knight in shining armor is an idealized or chivalrous man who comes to the rescue of a woman in a

difficult situation. The stories are supposed to end as happily ever after, but this was not the case for a young lady named "Baby D," an African-American woman who met Chris, a Mexican man.

It was the first day of summer, 2017. I had just moved into my new place. My daughter and I needed a fresh start. It was because of a recent breakup from my fiancé's infidelity that surfaced. My daughter was very aware of what was going on because she is a very mature teenager. Her performance and grades at school were decreasing due to the problems at home. The arguments started escalating to verbal abuse, and items being vandalized by him because my daughter and I were leaving. The relationship had been over for a while, and we'd agreed to let her finish out the rest of her school year, so once the school year ended, we moved on as planned.

I started a new job, and my daughter met some new friends. Our lives together now were much better, and we were in a safer environment. My daughter was happier that we moved closer to her grandparents only a couple of blocks away. She could walk there. We decided she'd stay the rest of summer break. On July 3, 2017, a couple of my friends had a get together and invited me. I agreed because I hadn't had or made time for myself lately. I was mostly working and focusing on my daughter's well-being. I went and actually had a great time and met some more new friends.

While there, one guy that I met kept watching me. I had never seen him before, and we had a mutual friend, so we got introduced and started conversing. I could barely understand what he was saying because his speech was foreign, but I caught on to it. I began picking on him because it sounded like how babies first talk, and their words in sentences are backwards. I was having a great time. Finally, I was laughing again, and it felt good to step out for a change. We exchanged phone numbers, and I left because I had to work the next morning. He

kissed me on my forehead and said he had a great time with me. He was glad that he stayed longer because he was leaving right before I pulled up. He asked me to call him when I got home to let him know I made it safe, and I agreed. I called to let him know that I made it in before I went to bed.

The next day, we made arrangements to see each other again, so we went on a date and started talking about our history and ancestors. He was talking about the Aztecs' land and what it was like back in those days of his people and I as well about Africans and ours. He told me that he had never had a relationship with a Black woman. He said, "So what do you think?" I said, "I don't think. I know I've never been with a Mexican man." We laughed about it.

As time went by, I started noticing that we were spending a whole lot more time together than I anticipated. In the mornings, before and/or after my alarms to get ready for work, I started receiving these "Good morning, beautiful" greetings and also during each break or lunch. I also received goodnight messages too, all like clockwork. At first, I wasn't too sure if we were moving too fast with the relationship-type calls. "Is he getting too attached, or maybe it's me?" One day, the same mutual friend I met this new guy through asked me what happened, if I'd gotten married, and why I had been so distant. I just laughed it off in a jokingly manner. Later that day, I brought up the conversation I had earlier about what our friend had said, and things just got serious really quickly. This man was now telling me that he fell in love with me from day one. After we made love, he said that I was his "Nigerita, Mi Amore," and he also was watching over me to make sure that no one else will ever come close enough to hurt or harm me. Before I could even wrap my head around what was just said, my phone rang. It was the same mutual friend whom we'd met through. This man snatched my phone, muted it and head-butted me. Within a blink of an eye, I wiped my face. That really wasn't called for. My head started burning all of a sudden, and that's when I noticed it wasn't sweat. It was actually my blood pouring down my face.

I really could not believe that this had just happened to me and for nothing. He told me that it was disrespectful to be talking to other men. He also told me that now we are together, and whenever I needed to go somewhere, he would also go. Little did I know, this man was far from joking or playing. I said, "Well, I'm sorry, but this is definitely not going to work because I have a job that you can't follow me on. He took my car keys and said, "Well, looks like you just quit." He said

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month

LOVE SHOULDN'T HURT
HELP US END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence Awareness



MI AMORE CONT'D

that he loved me so much. He said he would take care of me, and I didn't need anyone else for anything but him. My cellphone was ripped away from me and most of my contacts, along with their numbers. All of my calls started being screened. If anyone called me, I had to talk to them in front of him and put them on speaker. I could never wear regular clothes, only lingerie or nothing at all, inside the house. When we did go shopping or out in public, my hand had to be inside of his, and I couldn't make any eye contact whatsoever with anyone. He would put his hands around my throat and whisper in my ear, "You are my Nigrita and only mine. No matter what, and if you ever try to leave me, I will kill you. So don't try me, Mi Amore!"

I realized that this was no place for my daughter to be. I was in fear for my life, nonetheless hers, so I made arrangements for her not to come back home for her safety. I cried everyday because if things didn't go his way, I had to pay for it--non consensual sex, sexual assault, abuse... It seemed like all violations that could be named happened to me in that area of crimes. He was his own boss, so he went to work when he wanted to. When he did go, I had a sitter, and this was when I became aware that I was imprisoned inside my own home, and no one ever even knew for years until recently.

One day, I was lying down on the chair watching one of my favorite shows and had fallen asleep when I was rudely awakened by a punch in my head that I didn't deserve. At that time, I was working for a cleaning company and was assigned my own buildings at night. He was allowed to accompany me, but this night extra work was done for a grand opening the next day. I was so tired to the point where I didn't feel like eating. Apparently, he had been calling on me for a while, but being extremely

exhausted from cleaning this huge building, I'd passed out in my uniform. After he punched me, he threw a plastic table at me and told me that I was not allowed to sleep anywhere else but in the bed beside him. He headed towards the bedroom, and I headed towards a steel bat that was left over by the kids. It took everything in me not to hit this man in the head with it as bad as I wanted too. All I could see was me not being able to see my kids again for murder if I missed and killed him. So I swung the bat and said, "No more," hitting the wall. "This must stop. Either you leave, or I go." He was furious, and all I remember was me falling to the floor wrestling for the bat. He overpowered me, and all I remembered was him hitting me repeatedly with the steel bat. He hit me so hard on my ankle that I thought my bone had broken through my skin. I had a big whole inside of my little leg that wouldn't stop bleeding. I kept asking for emergency and medical help, but he denied me. He took my phone and made me go to bed as I cried, yelled, begged and pleaded for help. Nothing worked. He wrapped my lower right leg with a shirt as I lie there in excruciating pain, bleeding. I thought I was going to die.

I just started praying as hard as I could, asking the Good Lord to please help me...all night long. Finally, I could see daybreak, and he was asleep. I located my phone and called a family member that was on speed dial, asking her to please help me. She saved my life. By the Grace of God, her number was one that couldn't be deleted in my phone: Emergency Contact! She rushed me to the hospital, where I received stitches, X-rays and other major tests and bills, but I didn't care. I was a free woman! Meanwhile I was there, and I gave my statement to start pressing charges, and I also received some counseling and papers with other resources for help from the Police Department and Department of Social Services.

July 3, 2019...two years exactly after our acquaintance, who would ever thought that the man I thought was a Prince Charming, turned out to be the Devil's Advocate? I would have never in a million years thought that I would feel and live like an inmate in my own home. Now, I have broken free to never return to the most horrific time of my life, the time when I became the Imprisoned Mexican's Nigrita.

A watercolor illustration of a woman's silhouette in shades of red, orange, and pink. Her arms are raised in a gesture of freedom or triumph. The background is a soft, abstract wash of colors.

Shelter From the Storm

Domestic Violence Awareness



WHEN THE VOICE OF THE VICTIM SPEAKS Articles by Ta'Meeka Epps



Pamela Prince

Darlington County on behalf of the Pee Dee Coalition is Pamela Prince.

Some of the responsibilities of serving in this capacity include victim advocacy; hospital; court and legal accompaniment; referrals to community partners; resource procurement; providing community education and awareness on domestic and sexual violence; in-service trainings to professionals, churches and other groups; and management of the Darlington County team (which includes the advocate for the city of Darlington, the trauma counselor and the volunteer coordinator).

Prince views her service to others as an extension of her ministry instead of a typical 9 to 5 as she is serving those who are in need. "Oftentimes, victims lose their voice because of the trauma they have experienced. I am there to give them assistance in any way possible, including emotional support, physical support and advocacy. I would say I am the 'voice of the victim!'"

"Victimization looks like fear, hopelessness and loneliness. It looks like crying children being afraid because they witnessed their father or Mommy's boyfriend beating her up so severely that they thought she would die. Victimization looks like an 80-year-old female afraid because her husband of

HARTSVILLE - October is recognized nationally as Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Month--a time to celebrate survivors, honor those who have died, raise awareness through outreach, spotlight those who advocate for the victims and confirm a commitment to preventing intimate partner violence in our communities.

The Pee Dee Coalition (PDC) is a non-profit organization, which provides direct services/trainings in the following counties: Florence, Marion, Williamsburg, Chesterfield, Marlboro, Darlington and Dillon. Serving as the services coordinator for

30 years is abusive and aggressive towards her. Victimization does not have a preference regarding race, economic background, gender or religion; anyone can be a victim at any time, which is evident by the spectrum of clients the PDC serves," Prince stated.

The process for victims to receive assistance through the PDC is very user friendly. An individual may be referred to the crisis center for services or may seek assistance on his or her own. Once contact has been made, an assessment is completed to determine the needs of each individual. A safety plan is then tailored for the individual. PDC services are explained and offered, and a plan of action is discussed. Services offered after assessment may include legal advocacy and/or assistance completing orders for family court; transportation to bond hearings or family court hearings; or accompaniment to attorneys, law enforcement, etc. The PDC also provides information/referral to other partnering agencies to meet the client's needs.

Through continued outreach Prince, along with cofounder Tonya Flowers, started an annual Domestic Violence March and Rally in October of 2013. The purpose of the march is to bring awareness to the serious issue of domestic violence.

The organizers of the march want the community, victims, survivors and families to know they have not forgotten. They know there are many individuals who still suffer in silence at the hands of a loved one. They want people to know they will continue to march to educate and bring awareness, making a difference in the lives of others and, hopefully, bringing an end to pain.

Prince is a native of Hartsville and has been happily married to Timothy Prince Sr. for 31 years. They have two sons: Timothy D. Prince Jr. and Domonic D. Prince.

To learn more about The Pee Dee Coalition or to volunteer please visit www.peedeecoalition.org.

HARKEY GIVES VOICE TO COMMUNITY'S VULNERABLE



Michelle Harkey

Some of her daily tasks include, but are not limited to, coordinating and assisting with the implementation of community based advocacy and training programs; raising awareness about domestic violence and sexual assault in Williamsburg and surrounding counties; coordinating the creation and distribution of literature on behalf of the Circuit; supervising volunteer programs as directed; fostering new partnerships with community leaders, organizations and faith-based institutions to increase their knowledge of domestic violence (DV) and sexual assault (SA) resources and how to appropriately refer survivors in their community; and planning education and awareness activities for Domestic Violence Awareness Month, recognized annually during the month of October. Victims of domestic violence and sexual assault within the Pee Dee are provided services at no cost and can access them in a variety of ways. This includes walk-ins at satellite centers in the counties they serve, or they can access services through the 24-hour hotline: 800-273-1820. All age groups

SUMTER - "There is not a typical victim. We have worked on cases ranging from stalking to homicide." Those words were spoken by Michelle Harkey, outreach and training coordinator for the 3rd Judicial Circuit of the State of South Carolina, when asked how victimization looked for cases within the circuit. Harkey has been employed by the Pee Dee Coalition (PDC) in various capacities for approximately eight years. In her current position, she provides support to Williamsburg county, which is located in the 3rd Judicial Circuit. Her duties include victim services, trainings and supervision.

in need of assistance can receive help when needed.

The Pee Dee Coalition has secured a facility in Williamsburg County. This new location will strengthen its ability to enhance services provided to the constituents in the service area and cements its commitment to the education and prevention of DV and SA within the community. The Pee Dee Coalition alone is the only organization in the Pee Dee region that provides direct victim services to victims impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse at no cost to the victim. The seven counties it serves are Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marion, Marlboro and Williamsburg.

It is vitally important to make the community aware of the ills related to domestic violence and sexual assault. Awareness and education about domestic violence must be consistent and effective not only during the month of October but as long as there is an epidemic affecting the members of the community. Harkey knows that DV and SA are the least reported victimizations, and a complete picture of how many are affected and to what extent will never be fully painted. However, with continued exposure and education about DV and SA, coupled with relevant and relatable training and education they are determined to ensure victims become survivors.

Michelle Harkey is a native of Hampton, Va., but she was "raised everywhere" due to being a military brat as she so eloquently defines her childhood experiences. Her upbringing led her to join the armed forces and follow her mother's footsteps by being an Air Force veteran. Harkey chooses to serve out of a duty to provide support, care and a voice for the most vulnerable members in her community. She calls Sumter home, and she is mom to three amazing souls. Her hobbies include photography, painting, digital art and anything involving space and NASA.



HAMLIN DISCUSSES NEW BEGINNINGS *by Ta'Meeka Epps*



Janice Hamlin

Love and hope, along with manipulation, intimidation and fear are what fuel and maintain a toxic relationship. Victims lose so much to their victimizer--self esteem, self worth, financial stability, their children--and some lose their life. During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, we place in the spotlight the New Beginnings Transition Shelter (NB) of the Pee Dee Coalition.

New Beginnings Transitional Shelter is one of two of the Coalition's shelters that houses victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. New Beginnings serves former victims of domestic violence and sexual assault who are not in a crisis but have been displaced due to domestic violence and sexual assault and need longer term housing. New Beginnings is able to provide long-term housing up to two years.

The mission of New Beginnings is to help victims restore and rebuild their lives after experiencing the trauma of domestic violence and sexual assault. The goal is to empower, encourage and inspire the victims served by NB to regain stability and hope and build their self-esteem and self-worth while obtaining their idea of success in every aspect of their lives.

Janice Hamlin serves as Transitional Shelter services coordinator for New Beginnings. As the coordinator she is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the transitional shelter, supervising a professional staff which consists of two case managers, a women's counselor, a children's counselor, a house mother, a volunteer coordinator and two shelter advocates. The shelter also provides direct services to victims as



New Beginnings Transition Shelter

required by their individual situations.

NB Transition Shelter provides housing up to two years; transportation and procurement of resources for the shelter; financial education; life skills training; home ownership education; individual and group counseling for women and children; and referrals to other community agencies. NB also provides residents with food and

personal necessities while in the residential program. All services are provided at no cost to all who receive services through the shelter.

Victims set goals for themselves during intake at the shelter, and staff assists them in reaching their goals throughout their stay at the shelter. The shelter provides family outings, game nights and movie nights, among other activities. NB relies heavily on volunteers and donors to provide services and in-kind donations, which are not included in their Victims of Crimes Act (VOCA) grant.

The shelter is staffed 24 hours. Families are housed in private rooms, and singles share a room. All potential participants must complete an intense screening process to determine if New Beginnings is the best fit for them and/or families. NB receives referrals from the Pee Dee Coalition's Emergency Shelter, the Pee Dee area surrounding counties

and out of state individuals/families. NB serves single women and women with children only. However, referrals and resources are provided for males who seek assistance. Information on shelters for men or the ATV Program is provided depending on the need of the individual.

Recovery from emotional and physical abuse is addressed in a holistic approach, which taps into the victim's mind, body, soul and spirit. NB seeks to meet each individual where they are emotionally, physically,

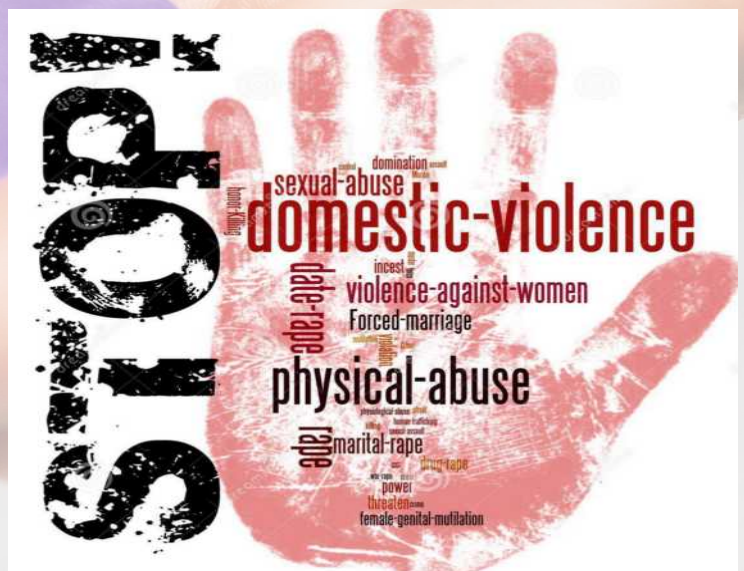


Lyana's Playground

spiritually, intellectually and socially. "This is not a one-size fit all approach as each individual enters the shelter with different experiences of trauma," stated Hamlin. The main questions asked of each individual are, "What is it that you need to move forward with your life, and how can we help you meet that need?"

NB operated as an emergency shelter prior to June 1, 2017, when it opened its doors as a transitional shelter. The area saw an increase in the amount of victims being displaced due to domestic violence and a longer term housing option was needed.

Janice Hamlin has served as services coordinator at New Beginnings for two years. However, she has been working with victims of domestic violence for over 15 years. She is the survivor of child abuse and two abusive marriages. Therefore, she is passionate about serving victims of domestic violence because of her own personal experiences. "I believe in empowering women to move from being a victim to overcoming the tragedies and trauma which life may bring. My strength comes from my relationship with my heavenly father. I know there is life after domestic violence if you truly have a desire to be made whole. I am a living testimony."





SOS LIFE SKILLS PARTICIPANTS FLOURISH IN THE WORKPLACE

Submitted by Diane Owens, Adult Services Program Manager, SOS Autism Healthcare Inc



Aaron Livingston

MYRTLE BEACH /SURFSIDE - Meet Aaron Livingston. Aaron is 28 years old and is currently employed at Publix grocery store in Myrtle Beach. Aaron first came to SOS Health Care approximately two years ago and has participated in the Life Skills program and has volunteered at several different events. Aaron is a graduate of the Coastal Carolina Life program and is involved in Special Olympics, Inclusive theater and Miracle League. Aaron has a very supportive family that focuses on his

strength and is always encouraging him to try new things and build his confidence. When first joining the SOS Health Care Life Skills group, Aaron was very shy and communicated very little. Over the past year and a half, however, Aaron has become very social with both his peers and the staff. He loves wrestling, so he tends to gravitate toward male staff so he can talk about wrestling and other sports. He has made wonderful friends in the group and has proven that he has a lot to offer to both friends and employers. He is an incredible young man that has a very bright future ahead because he never stops trying and never gives up. His disability has and will never get in the way of making his dreams come true.

Aaron has been employed for about one year at Publix, and his skill set has increased tremendously. When Aaron first started at Publix, he was very shy, used very little eye contact and would rarely speak to guests in the store unless he was prompted to do so. With the help of the job coach at SOS Health Care, Aaron has flourished at his job, and he was even given a stellar review, which also came with a raise. Due to Aaron's willingness to learn and his drive to work, Publix has increased his hours, and it is very obvious that he is very well liked there. Management has sung his praises and could not be happier with the progress he has made in such a short period of time. Aaron now greets guests when he is bagging groceries, and although he still may not talk a lot, he makes sure to use eye contact and smile at customers. He offers to take groceries out to customers' cars and makes sure that customers feel welcomed in the store and have a very pleasant experience. Through his hard work, we see Aaron having a very bright and successful future. He has learned so many skills while attending the SOS Health Care Life Skills class as well as from on the jobsite. Because of the opportunities that the employers at Publix have given him, Aaron now has confidence that he never had before and is thriving because he knows how proud so many people are of him.



Brenda Purvis

Meet Brenda Purvis. Brenda is an outstanding young lady who loves to work and is always working to improve her skillsets. Brenda was hired at Panera Bread in Surfside Beach about eight months ago, and she is absolutely loved there. Brenda works on the floor of the restaurant wiping down tables, collecting guests' dishes and

bringing them to the dish room, taking out the trash and keeping the entire area clean and orderly. Brenda fit into the Panera family immediately and made progress on the jobsite from the very beginning. She has answered guests' questions about the restaurant and has even spoken with guests that traveled from out of town about Myrtle Beach attractions in the area. Brenda receives job-coaching services through SOS Health Care, and these services assist her in fine tuning her skillset. Brenda absolutely loves going to work and is very proud of herself for holding a job and being well liked by all of the staff.



DCDSN PARTICIPANT SUCCESSES *by Les Echols*



Aaron Harris

DARLINGTON-October is Disability Employment Awareness Month, celebrating the contributions of workers with disabilities and the value of a workplace inclusive of their skills and talents. This month we caught up with a couple of success stories to celebrate.

Darlington County Disabilities and Special Needs (DCDSN) participant Aaron Harris has had several restaurant jobs, including Applebee's, Cook Out and McDonald's. He has also worked at Wal-Mart, Habitat for Humanity and the Darlington County Rehabilitation Center. The experience at each of these businesses was different for him, and each respective experience has helped him to identify some of his strengths and weaknesses. Aaron has had different duties since working at Burger King, from wiping tables, sweeping and mopping the dining area, to cleaning bathrooms, operating the cash register and helping prepare sandwiches to be served.

When asked why he thought inclusion is important, Aaron was very emotional. "All of my life it seemed that I have been excluded from things that I felt were important to me. People treated me differently and made me feel that I was different. I've tried hiding my disability, hoping that people would not recognize it, but that didn't often turn out so well. Working at Burger King helps me feel normal as if my disability didn't matter. The managers and workers treat me like a regular employee and not as an employee with a disability. I enjoy working there. I feel good about myself, and I feel that I am contributing



DCDSN CONT'D



Charles Ingram

back to my community,” Aaron stated.

Aaron also mentions that one of his main challenges is keeping up with the pace of assigned tasks. “I become frustrated when I am asked to speed up or work faster, when I feel that I am going as fast as I can. The restaurant business can get busy. The pace of the job can speed up quickly--one hour it can be slow, and then 30 minutes later it can speed up. A good worker must be able to adjust the pace of the job. Keeping up with that pace at times can be a challenge

for me,” continued Aaron. “I try my best to provide good customer service so that the customers want to come back, also knowing that at the end of my shift that I have given my best. There are a lot of things I am still learning, but I do know that if I give my best I will succeed,” Aaron concluded.

Aaron received a certificate from high school and later took some classes at the Darlington County Adult Education. He hopes to one day get his high school diploma.

Charles Ingram is another story of inspiration and inclusion. Ingram takes on multiple roles working on the City of Darlington’s lawn crew. His duties include weeding, edging, mowing, blowing, raking and bagging of grass clippings, leaves and debris.

Inclusion is important to Ingram as an individual with disabilities and special needs because it gives Ingram a sense of belonging, especially with working in the community. Inclusion helps to make him successful. Working in the community helps Ingram feel included. Extreme weather is one job challenge Ingram faces in his role because he cannot complete his assignments.

Ingram graduated from Hartsville High School in 1985. He has been employed on the enclave since 1990 and performs landscaping with his father during his free time.

DEFYING ODDS AGAINST AUTISM

by Les Echols



Conner Lewis helps with the cleanup

Disability Employment Awareness Month is an opportunity to highlight many stories of triumph and perseverance. Conner Lewis is a young man who, with the help of Florence County Disabilities and Special Needs, continues to defy odds and succeed, despite his autism.

According to his mother, Cindy Lewis, because Conner was born premature, he had to endure several brain surgeries early in life. He has struggled with seizure disorder throughout life, and his autism caused some behavioral and sensory issues. “School was difficult because of his behavior, and Conner also had sensitivities to some sounds and smells,” said Cindy.

Despite his challenges, Conner has always been very sociable, which worked to his advantage in the job search. “We tried him in numerous work settings, from a pet store to a school,” Cindy continued. “Maryland Fried Chicken in Florence was willing to work with him, so Vocational Rehabilitation and the school system coordinated with the restaurant to train him for a new position. They showed a strong spirit of inclusion by taking a risk on a member of our special needs population. He has now been employed there for over a year.”

Conner’s job duties include wiping tables, busing dishes, and refilling drinks for patrons. When asked about his employment, Conner’s response was succinct. “I love my job and dealing with customers,” he said.

Cindy mentioned that she does have concerns, as any parent would. “I worry that sometimes the understanding of his condition and behavior isn’t there, and that he may be bullied or picked on because of that. But the positive impact on Conner’s personality has been evident. He is more aware of people around him and meeting their needs. He is more self-confident and able to carry conversations better. He is better with learning process and procedures and following directions. We are all proud and thrilled with the success he is having,” said Cindy.

FCDSNB CLIENTS VICTORIOUS OVER STEREOTYPES

by Les Echols

The Florence County Disabilities and Special Needs Board (FCDSNB) plays a strong and practical role in assisting individuals with disabilities in Florence County. According to its mission statement, FCDSNB provides services throughout Florence County that bring out the best in people while promoting opportunities, broadening their abilities and supporting choices. FCDSNB works with individuals with intellectual disabilities, head and spinal cord injuries and autism. For over 18 years, Demetrius Scott has defeated all stereotypes and stigmas affiliated with being a client of the organization. He has been steadily employed and is a diligent and enthusiastic employee in the food service department at Briggs Elementary School.



Demetrius Scott

Demetrius Scott, 50, started school in New York and attended the New York Institute of Technology. When his grades began to drop, he became ineligible for the program. After that, he moved to Florence and completed West Florence High School. He began working with FCDSNB

in 1991, and the organization has assisted him since. “The FCDSNB has kept him employed,” said Demetrius’ mother, Florence Scott. “When he became unemployed, he was readmitted into the program, and he would always find a job,” continued Florence.

Demetrius works with his employment specialist, Brenda Brown, job coach and case manager at FCDSNB, who help him in his job transitions. Demetrius’ duties at Briggs include washing trays and taking out trash. When he is not working at Briggs, Demetrius also attends several day programs at FCDSNB so that he can remain connected to available services.



Kathy Atkinson

Kathy Atkinson, a 66-year-old Hartsville native, also loves the role FCDSNB has placed her in. She helps to clean up at the Salvation Army thrift store in Florence. Demetrius and Kathy are just two prevalent examples of the ways FCDSNB assists individuals in achieving employment with dignity and respect. The organization remains an effective pillar in the community and region.

A D O P T I O N

ALL IN HIS TIMING *by Angela Crosland*



Kim, Olivia “Livi” Qingli and Robby Peed. They traveled to China for 3 weeks in 2014 to complete the adoption process. This photo was taken at a beautiful park in the Guangxi Province where Livi was born.

The home with the white picket fence, the car, the dream job and the 2-4 children all make up the proverbial American Dream. That dream now includes the nearly 100 million Americans who have adoption in their immediate family. The Peeds are no exception. Robby and Kim Peed adopted their daughter Olivia “Livi” Qingli Peed from China when she was almost two years old. The now seven-year-old is 3 ½ feet, full of energy and loves dance and gymnastics.

No matter when or where the topic of adoption is discussed, the length and rigor of the process

seems to garner the bulk of the conversation. Nevermind the couple has just made one of the most difficult decisions of their lives to adopt, but now they must also endure a process, which can sometimes seem a bit unfair.

“Because of how long things seemed to be taking, there were many times that we wondered if it truly was in his plan for us to adopt,” says the 47-year-old Kim Peed of Florence. “I can’t tell you how many times we said, ‘Surely it should not take this long!’ Many people would tell us, ‘You know this is all in God’s timing!’”

Though it took a toll on them, the Peeds kept busy with paperwork while they awaited what they call their greatest blessing. “We started the adoption process in 2008, and on August 18, 2016, we laid our eyes on the most precious gift God could ever give us,” says Kim.

There was logistical planning, loads of paperwork and fervent prayer in the early stages. “We were both very blessed to have parents and family that were very supportive in our decision to adopt. They prayed for us. They stood right beside us through the entire process,” says Kim. “Now they are the very best grandparents and family that this little gal could have ever had the chance to have.”

The final ingredient involved the wait. That isn’t just with Bethany Christian Services either. The steps might vary by agency, but the timeframe for completion is quite universal. All in all, the Peeds were pleased with their services of choice.

“There are many adoption agencies out there,” says Robby. “(Bethany Christian Services) were absolutely amazing and walked us through each and every step from the very first home visit, all the way to the actual trip to China.”

Bethany’s website posts its claim of more than 75 years of service operating in more than 30 states and a dozen countries worldwide. “They provide much needed training and can honestly and openly answer any questions you may have before, during and after the process,” says Robby. “Bethany is extremely knowledgeable about domestic and international adoptions and very organized in their efforts to assist families in the adoption process.” After all, “They have been doing this a very long time, and we would recommend them 100 percent without hesitation,” he adds.

Each adoption situation is different with one distinct commonality, says Kim. “The one common thread that ties us all together is that we all have children that otherwise may not have had a chance at a loving and caring family—it truly is amazing what love can do,” she says. “Adoption is a beautiful thing—all you need to make a family is love.”

The least of their concerns and receiving barely a mention by the Peeds is the cost of adoption. Robby is in insurance sales and a commercial pilot and instructor, while Kim is an administrative assistant



Olivia “Livi” Qingli Peed, back in the good ‘ole USA!

for the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) Health Florence Medical Center. They knew it would take more than their salaries to bring a child home.

“Aside from questioning the process and attempting to be as patient as possible during the entire process, money was one of our biggest challenges,” says Kim. “Adoption is not cheap (domestic or international). We were extremely blessed to have friends organize a yard sale and design t-shirts to sell for our adoption.” In addition, Kim says there are grants and other unique ways to fundraise, particularly for such a worthy cause.

“Whether you choose to adopt domestically, internationally or through the foster system, you realize that there are so many children in this world that do not have the safe, loving and supportive environments that they need,” says Kim. “That is just one of the many reasons to adopt, (and) there are countless others.”

She purports that the blessings they’ve received as a couple far outweigh any their daughter may have received. “...but when you are in the middle of everything, and the waiting is so long, it is just so hard to rest easy in that,” says Kim. “In the end, we fully understood why the process took so long. It truly was his timing.”



A D O P T I O N

MEET THE ROBINSONS *by Angela Crosland*

BARRINEAU--November is National Adoption Awareness Month. In the United States, the first major adoption-related effort took place in Massachusetts in 1976. The governor at the time, proclaimed the first week of November "Adoption Week." It is a time to promote the need for more adoptive families to care for the large number of children in the foster care system.

It's as if the story lines of the Brady Bunch and Different Strokes converged on one family in the small farming community of Barrineau, just outside of Lake City. Meet the Robinson's tribe of eight. Four of their six children are adopted, and they wouldn't have it any other way.

When Aaron Robinson met his wife, Shannon, she was already the mother of two children: Reid Robinson, 19 (adopted at eight months old-Russia) and Anaston "Anna" Robinson, 19 (adopted at four months old-Kazakhstan).

Aaron had accepted a reassignment within his previous company, and one of his first tasks as manager was to hire a pharmacist for the store. Little did he know that his new hire would one day be his wife.

Once the couple did marry, Aaron adopted Reid and Anna and tried to have children the old-fashioned way, but things were complicated.

"We tried several times to have children, and it didn't work out," says Aaron. "We tried infertility clinics. (We decided there are kids out there that don't have (families)."

Therefore, they decided to engage the adoption process. While doing so, they found out that Shannon was pregnant. Of course, that led others to question whether they should follow through with the adoption.

"It seemed silly to us when people ask that," says Aaron. "It was a conscious decision we made and of course, we went through with the adoption."

The couple adopted their daughter Ryan (15 years old) from China at the age of 13 months and their son Jett (nine years old) from China at age three. Between the adoptions, Shannon gave birth to a son, Luke, who is now 14 years old and daughter Josslin "Joss" who is now 10 years old.

Having a family this size in such a small community can prove challenging, says Aaron, who is a native of Chicago, ILL. So few people live in Barrineau that their data has not been included in past Census counts.

"I never thought in a million years (we'd be here)," says Aaron,

who wondered, "How are my children going to see someone who is like them?"

Aaron says it takes effort to ensure the children are well-adjusted. "It hasn't always been smooth sailing. All children (biological and adoption) come with quirks and personalities," says Aaron.

In fact, he says his first adoptive child, Ryan, was afraid she wouldn't make friends, which makes it even more important to be attuned to the children's needs, which are different from those who weren't adopted. "Sometimes they want to keep up with their culture, and sometimes they say 'I just want to fit in,'" says Aaron. "Our job as a parent is to support both."

Though adoption in families is ever increasing, there are still some who Aaron say have a difficult time understanding why they made the decision to do so. In fact, when the couple found out they were expecting a son, there were people who said, "Aren't you so happy you're going to have your own son now?"

Aaron's answer is a tattoo on his forearm: "Four of my children are adopted. I forgot which ones..."

Aaron is associate services manager for Honda of South Carolina Mfg., Inc. (Timmons ville), while Shannon is the Pharmacy Manager at CVS in Target (Florence).

For those who are interested in adoption, Aaron recommends adoption.org.

The website offers the following advice about International Adoptions:

Things To Know About International Adoption

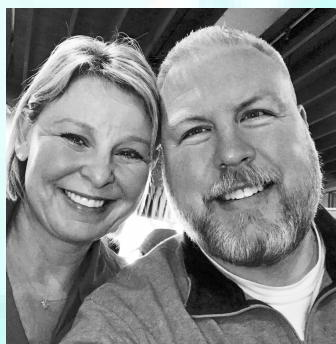
1. It's important to examine your motivations before moving forward.
2. You can't adopt from just any country.
3. The importance of selecting a good adoption agency cannot be overstated.
4. You'll have to make some tough decisions out of the gate.
5. You'll have to be willing to become a paperwork person, at least temporarily.
6. A substantial financial commitment is required.
7. Early life experiences will affect your child. Be prepared to address the effects of trauma and institutionalization.
8. You'll need to be prepared to become a multicultural family.
9. You'll need to let go of a lot of control.
10. Your life will never be the same.



Jett



Reid



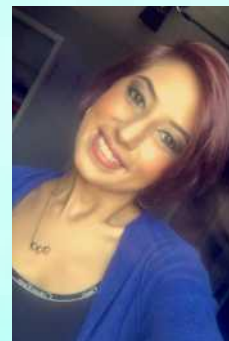
Shannon and Aaron



Joss



Ryan



Anaston "Anna"



Luke



Caregiver Appreciation

DREAMS INTO REALITY *Articles by Kim Williams*



Hanna Easler

Hanna Easler is a strongly motivated student who is striving to make a difference in her surrounding communities.

It was just six years ago that she began dancing at a Bennettsville competitive dance studio. While in the midst of falling in love with this expressive form of movement, she also found a model for her future. From the time she was a little girl, she recalled how she always wanted to be a nurse. She took notice of how the owner of the studio worked

tirelessly in the dance industry, as well as while serving in multiple facilities as a nurse. Easler recognized his motivation to help people of all ages in any way that he could. She began to develop similar aspirations for her future.

At 18 years of age, Easler began teaching competitive dance at that same studio to children of various ages. Soon after, she graduated in the top five of her high school class. While considering which college to attend, there were many factors to take into account. She desired a school that had a quality nursing program, yet, would still be close to home and family. Becoming a Patriot was a perfect choice. It was then that she chose to attend Francis Marion University (FMU).

Today Easler continues to excel at Francis Marion University. However, that is not all that keeps her busy. This past summer, she worked diligently to be able to obtain her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license. It was close to that time that the owners of Personal Care of Florence discovered her and her determination and drive for quality patient care. As a result, Easler joined the family atmosphere at Personal Care and declares that it has been an experience that she has loved every minute of.

From her first day, she has felt welcomed and appreciated. It is that same sense of peace and security that she desires to give fellow CNAs, patients and their families whom Personal Care has the opportunity to work with. Easler considers herself blessed in the role she serves. She studies patient files and their needs while comparing them to their database of CNAs. She strives to make the best possible match with the caregivers and patients. The most rewarding part of the job is when a patient or their family expresses their thankfulness about their caregiver or the care in which they are receiving and knowing that she had a specific role in making that connection happen.



Hanna with co-workers and the owner of Academy of Movement 2

On the other hand, there are challenges that Easler faces at times, like when a CNA is unable to make one of his or her client's scheduled appointments, and Easler is able to go out into the field and fill in for them. This task can be difficult because a caregiver often has to be an advocate for patients,

who cannot advocate for themselves. CNAs are able to develop a one to one connection with patients and offer a different perspective point

from what people in the office see, which allows them to be able to help them more.

Easler likes to tell others who may be considering a future in the caregiving field that they have to have the 3 P's: Prepare, Patience, and Passion. They need to prepare with proper training for the situations that may arise in caregiving. Patience is key in this field and is not to be overlooked. There will be difficult days, and you have to remember to have patience. Lastly, you have to have passion. A caregiver must have the desire to care for others. Without passion, you lose the motivation in what you are trying to accomplish.

While Easler is still fairly new in this field, she is excited to learn more and touch as many peoples' lives along this journey.

CAREGIVER: NOT JUST A JOB.



Jessica Stone

Jessica Stone spent her childhood and early adult years with her grandparents, learning how to be helpful and love others. As she grew older, she became more independent and developed a desire to care for those who had helped her for so long. Stone is a single mother of two children (15 and 11), as well as guardian of her nephew. They recently moved from West Rutland, Vermont, to South Carolina. Every person she has taken care of thus far has inspired her to become the caregiver she is today and to further her skills.

Personal Care of Florence is where Stone now works and helps others. There have been numerous clients who have made lasting impacts on her life, who have become like members of an extended family. Each day of caring for them presents new experiences and stories. Her favorite memories are when they share about their younger days and memories of the war.

According to Stone, one of the most rewarding aspects of being a caregiver is knowing that the people she takes care of appreciate what is being done for them. It makes her work so satisfying when she is able to help bring a smile to their faces. When asked what advice she would give to those seeking a position as a caregiver, she suggests treating clients how you would want to be taken care of. It also takes a tremendous amount of patience in this field, and while caring for people may not be for everyone, Stone is thankful and proud that her life has led her in this direction.





Caregiver Appreciation

CAREGIVING: A LABOR OF LOVE by Kim Williams



Pamela Tedder

DARLINGTON-Native of Darlington, Pamela Tedder, is making a difference for several families in the Pee Dee. She is a mother of four children aged 25, 15, 14 and 13. She also has a four-year-old grandson.

A proud alumnus of Darlington High School class of 1996, Tedder went on to pursue nursing as a student at Florence Darlington Technical College. The field of nursing taught her many things. Soon, however, she began to feel led more towards the caring side of

nursing over the medicinal part because she recognized the substantial need at the patient care level. Many people whom she encountered seemed to be dealing with various issues, such as a lack of family presence or the loss of hope in their daily life. The opportunity to become a caregiver allowed Tedder the chance to help bridge the missing gap in her patients' lives, which she believes, is love.

Currently, Tedder has been a caregiver for over 15 years. She remembers how she had to develop tough skin in those early years. Day-to-day interactions between patient, caregiver and family members begin to create meaningful relationships that make it difficult to watch loved ones deteriorate as their conditions worsen. However, "Love is what (continues to) drive me," she says. "It's the best medicine we can ever give people."

Over the years, Tedder's patients and schedules have changed. However, each day is a labor of love. Most often, her day begins at 5 a.m. as she drives to Hartsville to help ready her total care patient for the day ahead. Once the patient boards the bus to her adult daycare facility, Tedder continues on to Bennettsville where she has the opportunity

to work with another patient, who is blind. He is so thankful for Tedder because she helps him with many necessities, like making sure his house is in order, grocery shopping and taking him to and from doctor's appointments. As the afternoon progresses, Tedder then returns to Hartsville to receive her patient off of the bus from her adult daycare. The hardworking caregiver then continues to help the patient's family by bathing, feeding and getting her ready for bed. Afterwards, Tedder returns to Darlington to care for her youngest patient, who she has fallen in love with: 4-year-old Kingston.



Pamela and her youngest patient, Kingston

Kingston was born at 28 weeks and one day. After birth, he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy and Von Willebrand disease. Despite the challenges he goes through, Tedder considers him to be her little hero because he always continues to persevere, no matter the odds. Through their close relationship, Kingston inspires her to keep going and pushing herself to be the caregiver that others need.

Tedder remains thankful to Personal Care of Florence because they have given her so much pride in the job she is able to do. If anyone chooses to follow in the caregiving field, she suggests that they always remember to be humble in all circumstances. "We are all in this life together and never know what tomorrow may hold for us. Therefore, caregivers should always treat people with the utmost respect and in a manner that you would like to be treated."

Above all, showing patience, taking her time and freely loving people is what has driven Pamela Tedder into the quality caregiver she is today.



November is National Family Caregivers Month

A great time to give thanks to America's 90 million unpaid family, friends and neighbors who provide 80% of the senior care for our elderly loved ones within the United States.



ABB WELCOMES NEW STAFF TO ITS TEAM



Vicki Coleman

MULLINS-Vicki Coleman joins Anderson Brothers Bank (ABB) as a consumer loan officer. Coleman will be based in the bank's Mullins office at 232 West McIntyre Street. In her role, Coleman will assist customers with the various financial services offered by the bank. She will be involved in customer relations and market development. Coleman brings over 42 years financial experience to Anderson Brothers Bank, including her most recent service with One Main Financial.

"We are extremely excited that Vicki is joining our lending team in Mullins," said Johnny Floyd, VP Marion-Dillon County executive with Anderson Brothers Bank. "She offers a wealth of knowledge and experience in consumer lending and a proven ability to assist clients in financing arrangements. She will make a significant impact in our office on McIntyre Street and our continued growth in our market."

LORIS-Anderson Brothers Bank announces the promotion of Tammy Strickland as branch operations coordinator of the Loris 701 office located at 302 Hwy 701 N. Strickland joined Anderson Brothers Bank in 2015 and has advanced progressively through responsible positions. She first joined ABB as a teller then advanced to customer service representative in 2017, where she also played a key role in assisting loan officers.



Tammy Strickland

In Strickland's new role, she will provide administrative and supervisory support within the branch office to ensure effective and efficient customer service and teller operations. She will manage work activities of branch

tellers by overseeing, planning and scheduling duties; confer with retail sales and the service leader to resolve operational issues and extraordinary occurrences; assist loan officers as needed; and accept other duties as assigned.

"Tammy is a talented, hands-on banker, and her strengths and experience have proved to be invaluable as we continue to grow in Horry County," said Lisa Rife, vice president and branch manager with Anderson Brothers Bank. "She has an enthusiastic desire to contribute to the continued growth of this bank, and her positive attitude has equipped her to be a tremendous asset. Tammy is focused on strengthening our customer relationships and committed to community involvement while representing our bank and working closely with our customers."

ABB announces the addition of Rhett Calcutt as a loan officer. Calcutt will be based in the bank's Florence 2nd Loop Office. In his role, Calcutt will assist customers with the various financial services offered by the bank, including consumer and personal loans. He will be involved in customer relations and market development. Calcutt has an extensive background



Rhett Calcutt

in the finance industry with 20 years of experience to, including his most recent service with One Main Financial.

"Rhett will be a valuable asset to our bank and to our customers, and we are confident in his abilities to further enhance our continued growth in Florence County," said Randy Altman, vice president and Florence county executive with Anderson Brothers Bank. "He has a proven ability to assist clients in financing arrangements and will make a significant impact in the Florence area."



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YOUR DEBT
INTO ONE
LOAN PAYMENT**



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from \$1,000 to \$10,000*



Credit Scores
as Low as 550!**



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**ANDERSON
BROTHERS BANK**

*Certain restrictions apply. **Subject to credit approval. See Bank for details.



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VALUING AND RE-VALUING YOUR BUSINESS

Business Valuation

As a business owner, you probably know everything about how your company works--but maybe not what it's worth. If so, that might create problems in the eventual sale or transfer of your business, especially if the sale or transfer is sudden.

Proper valuation of your business helps you better protect your interests and the welfare of your family and heirs. It also eases the transition. By taking the guess work out of the valuation process you can avoid disagreements between the different parties.

Subsequently, valuation may help you in planning and saving taxes. Since valuation helps the IRS determine estate taxes and the tax basis for any future sale, with proper planning, you may be able to put financial strategies in place that may save you money in the long run.

Now, even if a sale or retirement is years away, understanding what your company is worth today can have multiple pay-offs; it's information that can help you secure financing or make decisions on whether to expand or stay the course. Valuation serves as an important management tool that can give you insights on how to reposition your business to enhance its marketability.

So how do you determine the value of your business? There are generally three approaches used to calculate a business valuation. The asset-based approach is balance sheet-focused using the difference between a company's assets and liabilities to determine its value. The second is the market approach, which values the business, based on

pricing multiples derived from the sale of comparable companies. And finally there's the income approach, which establishes a figure from capitalizing or discounting the company's projected economic benefit stream.

Remember that as your business changes, so might your valuation, so be sure to keep it up-to-date. The best way to do that is to make it a standard part of your annual financial review. For instance, you can make it a habit to have your valuation reviewed by a specialist each year right before you meet with your agent to review your insurance policy. That will also help you ensure that you maintain just the right amount of insurance coverage for your business.

Valuation is a simple idea but one that's complex to execute. Certified financial experts who specialize in valuations are uniquely qualified to determine which valuation methods will deliver an accurate assessment for a given industry. They take the emotion out of the calculation but instill peace of mind.

Business owners have many complicated issues that they need to navigate day in and day out. The sooner you address the needs of your business, the better off you'll be.

This educational third-party article is provided as a courtesy by [Agent's Name], Agent, (CA/AR Ins. Lic. #) Julie A Cord, Agent, New York Life Insurance Company. To learn more about the information or topics discussed, please contact Julie A Cord at jacord@ft.newyorklife.com or 317-289-3010.

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LESSONS THAT TEACH KIDS ABOUT MONEY



As our children are back in school, do you know how much of their classroom time will be devoted to learning about money? Unfortunately, the answer to this question is generally “not much.” Only 19 states require high school students to take a course in personal finance, so most kids are missing out on this important part of their education.

The good news is we can introduce our children not only to the practical realities of managing a checking account and sticking to a budget, but also to bigger financial concepts like saving for a goal and investing for the future.

Here are common life experiences I think parents can use to get their kids to pay attention to some important financial concepts.

1) Getting an allowance - Want your kids to make good money choices? Give them some money of their own to manage. An allowance is a good first step. Set expectations right from the start. For example, you may want to tie at least part of their allowance to chores, which can give them a taste of responsibility as well as an understanding of what it’s like to work and be rewarded.

What do you expect your kids to pay for with their own money? Help them come up with a budget to handle their expenses, and don’t bail them out if they fall short. The amount and frequency of an allowance will change as your kids get older, but the main thing is to let them manage and make their own mistakes.

2) Saving for a big purchase - Whether your child wants a bike or a laptop, having a savings goal brings the concepts of trade-offs, delayed gratification and compound interest home. Start by creating a time frame and savings plan for the purchase. Help your child track spending and identify opportunities to save. An online savings calculator can be a great motivator--as can offering to match a portion of your child’s saving. This would also be a good time to help your child open a savings account and become familiar with the concept of compound interest.

As kids get older and their savings goals get loftier--say a car or a big trip--there are other financial lessons that go beyond savings. There’s researching and comparison shopping, possibly financing and handling associated expenses. That takes not only saving for the purchase, but ongoing budgeting and money management. A monthly budget planner is an excellent tool to help your teen put the numbers together, even if you’re doing it as a joint venture.

3) First job - If you haven’t done so already, now’s the time to help your teen open and manage a checking account and perhaps even a credit or debit card. To reinforce saving, encourage setting up an automatic deposit from a checking to a savings account. Plus, as your teen has more savings, you could suggest opening a brokerage account

(custodial if under 18), or even an IRA if they have earned income, and introduce some basic investing concepts. An IRA can be a great way to reinforce the importance of saving for retirement, and a first paycheck is a great introduction to taxes.

4) Going to college - If your kids are college bound, hopefully you’ve involved them in saving toward this major goal. But there’s more to college costs than tuition. Sit down together and talk about living expenses, books, food, transportation, personal care and insurance--all the things they may have taken for granted so far. Be clear on what you’ll pay for and what you expect your college student to cover. Then create a budget together.

Make sure your student has a checking account and knows how to properly use a debit card or a credit card to handle expenses. If you haven’t had the credit card talk yet, now’s the time to get into the details, from interest to late fees to credit reports. Be sure to stress the pitfalls of misuse, which could really come back to haunt them later in life.

5) Moving out - Hopefully, the lessons learned so far will help your kids with this major transition, but they probably still need your guidance on the financial realities of living on their own: understanding how to balance essential expenses and nice-to-haves, car and renters insurance, an emergency fund and staying on top of debt (especially student loans). If your kids haven’t been interested in these things before, they certainly should be now.



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HERE MATTERS *Submitted by Synovus*

At Synovus, we believe the best way to ensure the long-term health of our bank is to help ensure the health of the communities we serve. That means more than taking deposits, providing loans or earning the right to do the next transaction. It also means serving with our time, talent and resources.

Synovus' community outreach program, "Here Matters," builds on our legacy of service to local communities as the "bank of here," focusing Synovus' volunteer and financial contributions in three areas: education, health and wellness and needs-based opportunities. Synovus team members demonstrate that "Here Matters" through pre-planned, footprint-wide projects and through our rapid response to event-driven needs.

In 2019, team members in Synovus' five-state footprint collected more than 15,600 bottles of water, three tons of peanut butter and jelly, and 1,170 books and volunteered for more than 50 projects across our footprint during our spring "Here Matters" outreach. In South Carolina, team members collected books for the library at Connie Maxwell Children's Home in Greenwood; contributed toiletries and other personal-use items for the New Day on Mill transitional housing facility in Camden; threw a pizza party and played financial-literacy bingo at Manning Middle School in Manning; participated in American Heart Association's Heartwalk in Sumter; and collected items for Harvest Hope Food Bank in Columbia.

In the fall of 2018, team members collected nearly 28,000 diapers and more than 4,500 10-item toiletry kits (including shampoo, soap, deodorant, shaving cream, razors, etc.) for Synovus' first ever Simple Needs Project. Boxes of diapers, baby wipes, toothpaste, mouthwash — 73,000 items in all! — were assembled into kits and packed for

delivery to more than 80 community service agencies across our footprint, including Nashville Rescue Mission, Tuscaloosa One Place, St. Pete Free Clinic and Transitions Homeless Center.

In October, we celebrate military, public safety officers and first-responders as part of an "Honoring Our Heroes" outreach. Picnic lunches and meal deliveries to fire stations and precincts are provided to on-duty first responders throughout the footprint. Team members collect blankets, clothing and food staples for homeless veterans, and others work on home renovation projects for elderly or disabled veterans. Several branches have partnered with Operation Shoe Box and Support our Soldiers to send care packages to overseas military members, with one branch collecting more than 200 pounds of snacks, toiletries, video games and other items.

Not every initiative has been planned in advance. As Hurricane Irma approached south Florida in 2017, team members in Columbus assembled a convoy of five trucks for immediate dispatch. Using branches in Naples and Fort Meyers as staging areas, the team distributed 600 cases of water, gas generators, lumber, carpentry tools and other supplies and provided assistance with clean-up efforts. Around the footprint, team members raised \$18,000, and the company contributed an additional \$10,000 for distribution to team members with immediate needs and for community relief efforts.

As part of "Here Matters," Synovus provides financial and volunteer contributions to local agencies such as United Way, which we support in many of the communities in our footprint and Feeding America food banks. We also have long-standing relationships with many elementary, middle and high schools as part of "Here Matters" focus on education.

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

WHAT DOES MENTAL ILLNESS FEEL LIKE? *Submitted by Areoni Flegler, Behavioral interventionist, titled CSP**Areoni Flegler*

The topic of mental illness, also known as mental health disorders, is growing and becoming a vital discussion in America. When we think of mental illness and what it feels like, let's take a moment to think and discuss times where our feelings and emotions made us feel uncomfortable.

Have you ever noticed at times that you are more anxious than others? Before presenting a huge presentation, how do you feel? Going on a date with someone for the first

time? Walking into a job interview? Imagine hearing many different voices in your head persuading you. After these events, we feel a sigh of relief. Now imagine if we weren't granted with that relief. Imagine being unable to control anxious, depressive feelings.

Throughout my studies, I have heard individuals, begging and pleading to "please make it stop," ask questions such as, "Why is my body betraying me?" or "Why is my body doing this to me?" For a sense of relief, many mental health patients are prescribed medication to assist with their specific disorder. These particular types of medications send signals to the brain, adjusting behaviors. For example, those diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity (ADHD) are often prescribed Adderall, Ritalin, Dexedrine, etc. to send signals to the brain assisting with staying focus, concentrating, defiance, etc.

Fighting Stigmas

Did you know that the stigma of mental illness can be just as damaging as the symptoms? Many individuals who are diagnosed with specific mental health disorders are often discriminated and oppressed against in their daily, personal, school and recreational settings. But why? Are we afraid of those who suffer from mental illnesses? This leads us to ask the question, "What about mental illness causes social rejection?" Is it lack of knowledge and fear of intolerance?

According to one's cultural background, some may believe that mental illness does not exist. Tons of individuals are currently suffering from a mental health illness who are not receiving proper care due to them being embarrassed or just ignoring their symptoms. An article by Feldman & Crandall (2007) stated that mental illness stigma can lead to strained familial relationships. Let's think, imagine suffering from depression all alone; you haven't told your family, closest friends, no one. You start to isolate yourself from everyone and everything. As you reject those close around you, they start to have reciprocated feelings towards you! Now you feel doomed. You did not mean to turn everyone away, you just felt extremely sad and wanted to be alone. You were too embarrassed to let someone know the depressive feelings you've been feeling because you're thinking they will not understand. Now you begin contemplating if this world even needs you in it.

I can fondly remember taking social psychology in undergrad and constantly hearing the word "norm," such as normal, norms, etc. I remember my professor expressing how much she despised the term so much because what exactly is normal? Nothing is normal. We are all unique in our own special way although noticing a change in one's

usual behavior is what we would call non-normative. In many cases, children and adolescents with mental disorders often self-stigmatize themselves as they have negative views internally and are deemed to have low levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy (Parritz & Troy, 2018)

But how do we break the stigma against mental illness? First, we can refrain from having negative or unpleasant views upon seeking professional services. Learning about mental health disorders and understanding the appropriate language to use is also a way to fight the stigma. As we educate ourselves, we can understand the behaviors of those suffering from mental health conditions. Showing compassion and uplifting those who are suffering from mental health disorders are also ways to decrease the stigma against mental health. Did you know that some people are not aware when they're being stigmatizing? It's okay to speak up and correct them.

How can we take care of our mental health?*Areoni Flegler*

Taking care and being aware of yourself is one of the most important steps towards being able to practice good mental health. Let's say you've had an extremely long week at the office and are not feeling your best. Having these consistent negative feelings for long periods can be harmful and cause negative lighting on your behaviors overall. When we think of self-care, think of the upkeep or maintenance of our wellbeing. When thinking of self-

care, think of it as an outlet to focus solely on yourself.

Studies have shown that many people fail at practicing self-care due to the act of feeling selfish. However, it is okay to make time for ourselves and value ourselves. Besides, if we aren't taking the time out to take care of ourselves, then who will? Self-care can be ranged as going on a week's long vacation, lighting up your favorite candle scent, watching your favorite show, etc. Practicing self-care is all about appreciating yourself. As one practices self-care, remember to learn and understand how to appreciate yourself, take care of your body, understand and learn how to deal and cope with stress, anxiety, etc. Developing different strategies and coping skills to assist with taking care of your mental health is also a huge step to make in regards to self-care.

If you or someone you know are exhibiting mental health symptoms as such, please seek professional attention immediately. It's okay to not be okay.

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CARESOUTH DIRECTOR SHARES HIS DRIVE Submitted by Andrew Boardwine, Communications Specialist



Marek Calhoun and family

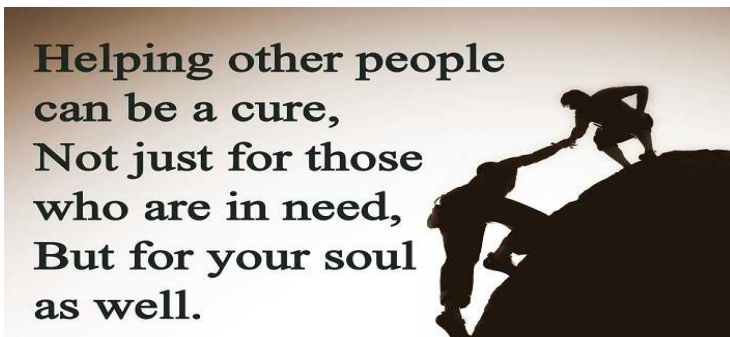
DARLINGTON—Marek Calhoun is passionate about serving, mentoring and enhancing the lives of those in the Pee Dee area through his work in the community.

Calhoun, a Pee Dee native, began his career in law enforcement working as a detention officer for the Marlboro County Sheriff's Office in May of 1998 before taking a position as

a patrolling officer with the Hartsville Police Department in October of 2000. After rising through the ranks, Calhoun was promoted to corporal before eventually having to medically retire in October of 2006 due to a condition known as sarcoidosis that affected his lungs.

Despite the setback, Calhoun elected to forgo his retirement pension and began a job with Vantage Point—a subdivision of CareSouth Carolina—working as the Regional Long-Term Care ombudsman. In the role, Calhoun served as an advocate for residents who lived in long term care facilities. In addition, he investigated and resolved complaints to include allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation, as well as issues of quality of care and resident's rights made either by the resident or on behalf of the resident.

"It took time to adjust to being in a much different environment, but I just knew I wanted to help people and serve in the community," Calhoun said. "This job still had an investigative element to it, and I was still able to help people, just in a different capacity."



Calhoun said he fell in love with CareSouth Carolina as an organization and knew that he wanted to have a career working to help those in need. "Once I realized what they do and the people they try to help, that solidified where I wanted to be," Calhoun said. "CareSouth, in addition to being the premier medical provider of choice, serves those who are under insured or uninsured, and I can empathize with that population. During the time I was out on retirement, I didn't have insurance—with a preexisting condition—and I didn't know what I was going to do."

"I had no clue what a community health center was or what it was all about, but once I realized how we were able to serve in the community and offer care to those who may not be able to receive it otherwise, I knew it was for me," Calhoun added.

After working at Vantage Point for around three years, Calhoun decided to test his hand in management. He was promoted to site administrator at the Lake View and McColl offices in 2010. He later transferred over to the Hartsville site and, by the middle of 2011, was the site administrator for Hartsville and Bennettsville before later taking on other CareSouth Carolina offices in Lake View, Dillon and McColl.

"I didn't know much about health care, but it was more about supervising people and being a part of the organization," Calhoun said. "I know people and that was a great opportunity to step into leadership."

Nearly four years later, Calhoun had an opportunity to work with the broader community outside of CareSouth's offices. Calhoun applied for a position within the Community Health Division of CareSouth Carolina but, unfortunately, didn't get it the first time around. He patiently waited and the position came open again. This time, he was brought on as the community service manager in 2010.

Just recently, he received a title change to director of Social & Community Services. Calhoun oversees CareSouth's Community Outreach Team, areas of Family Support Services and Population Health Management departments. They work to provide health screenings, health education, social services navigation, hospital case management and help to provide access to a medical home to those in the Pee Dee community.

In March of 2019, Calhoun was awarded a distinguished Master of Advocacy certificate by The National Association of Community Health Centers - Health Center Advocacy Network. The award, which was born out of the Grassroots Advocacy Leadership Program, was given in recognition of completion of the requirements for the Fall 2018 NACHC Advocacy Leadership Program.

Outside of work, Calhoun is a diehard football fan and enjoys cheering on the Oakland Raiders and Notre Dame Fighting Irish. He also serves as a behavioral interventionist, working closely with children and families to provide behavior modification, psychosocial rehabilitation and family support services. Calhoun also enjoys cooking and spending time with his family, especially his wife, Eutashia, who he recently married in May, and his son, Messiah, who affectionately goes by the nickname "Bubba."

"I want to make a difference in the lives of people," Calhoun said. "That's what drives me every day, knowing that me and my team and CareSouth have touched and made a difference in the lives of those in the community we serve."



We must find time to stop and **thank the people** who make a difference in **our lives**.

— John F. Kennedy

PATIENT SUCCESS STORY: KAREN MELTON Submitted by Andrew Boardwine, Communications Specialist



Karen Melton consulting with her doctor

HARTSVILLE—“I hope we’re going to be able save your leg.” Those were the words that Karen Melton, a Hartsville native, heard on Wednesday, January 9, when she made a visit to CareSouth Carolina.

Melton came to CareSouth Carolina after a period of 13 days in the

hospital. She said it all started on Christmas Eve when she and her husband Shawn were at his brother’s house celebrating the holiday.

“I began throwing up and running a very high fever,” Melton said. “We went to the ER and they did blood work and prescribed medications, but after a day, we still couldn’t get the fever down. The nurse asked me if anything hurt when I came back, and I said there was a little spot on my ankle that was burning.”

Ultimately, what looked like a small rash on her ankle spread to her entire leg and turned a very dark color, almost similar to that of a burn victim. “My fever was still up, and it got worse and worse,” Melton said. “I actually spiked a temperature of 104.4.”

Melton made an appointment to see Jennifer Lynch, FNP-C at the CareSouth Carolina Hartsville office on Wednesday, January 9, and said she was shocked to hear that she could potentially lose her leg.

“Jennifer came in and said, ‘I hope to save your leg.’” Melton said. “My jaw just dropped.”

Over the next few weeks, Melton underwent IV Therapy and wound treatment with Lynch and continued to see a dermatologist. The IV Infusion

department was started in 2016 as a way to treat complex patients in the outpatient setting with the same quality of care they would receive in the hospital. Patients with skin, lung, and bone infections have been treated since the department has been started. Because of the quality of care these patients receive by the experienced critical care nurses, lives and limbs have been saved.

The CareSouth Carolina IV Department infused IV antibiotics twice a day for 28 total doses and provided daily wound care to help Melton recover from her lower limb cellulitis. “In many ways I had to be treated like a burn victim,” Melton said. “In 10 days, Jennifer and the nurses made it go from this dark, discolored and swollen leg, and got it under control. I’m able to walk and am getting back to being active again.”

Melton said she is working with medical professionals, including Lynch, to find out what caused the breakout and will undergo an MRI and potentially have scrape-ins as precautionary measures.

“There’s still a process to get back to 100 percent,” Melton said. “We’re still trying to figure out what caused it and what exactly is going on, but I know I’m in good hands going forward, and there’s been great progress.”

“If it wasn’t for Jennifer, I don’t know what would’ve happened,” Melton said.

CareSouth Carolina is a private, non-profit community health center delivering patient-centered health and life services in the Pee Dee region of South Carolina. CareSouth Carolina operates centers in Bennettsville, Bishopville, Cheraw, Chesterfield, Dillon, Hartsville, Lake View, Latta, McColl and Society Hill. To schedule an appointment, visit caresouth-carolina.com.



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HOPEHEALTH WELCOMES NEW PROVIDERS

Submitted by Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator HopeHealth

HopeHealth has welcomed multiple providers recently.



Robert Bauer, MD/PhD

Psychiatrist Robert Bauer, MD/PhD, joined the Behavioral Health Services team in September to serve patients at HopeHealth on Palmetto Street in Florence. He earned his doctorate from the University of Illinois College of Medicine and received a PhD in mathematics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He completed his internship and residency with Barnes-Jewish Hospital and Washington University in Saint Louis, Missouri. Dr. Bauer is a member of the American Psychiatric Association and is board eligible in Psychiatry.



J. Harrell Docherty Jr., MD

Dr. J. Harrell Docherty is board certified in internal medicine and rheumatology. He joined HopeHealth in August and serves patients at HopeHealth on Palmetto Street in Florence on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays and at HopeHealth in Manning on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Docherty earned a doctorate from the Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston. He completed his internship in internal medicine, his residency, and a fellowship in rheumatology at the University of Tennessee in Memphis.



Faith Scott, APRN, FNP-C

Faith Scott joined HopeHealth in September and will see Access Hope patients at the Medical Plaza. Scott earned her Master of Science/Nurse Practitioner from the University of South Carolina, Columbia, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston. From Florence originally, Scott is a member of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society and the Hartsville Area Advanced Practice Nurses.



Jessica Robertson, LMSW

HopeHealth welcomed Jessica Robertson, LMSW, as a behavioral health consultant in September. She sees primary care patients at the Medical Plaza in Florence. Robertson graduated from Marywood University, Scranton, Pa., with a Master of Social Work and from East Stroudsburg University, Pa., with a Bachelor of Social Work. She worked as a clinician in residential treatment facilities and specialized in working with adolescent males in juvenile probation, then worked as a diagnostic clinician and behavioral/mental health clinician.



Sheryl Singleton, FNP

Sheryl Singleton joined HopeHealth in August 2019 as a family nurse practitioner and serves patients at HopeHealth in Orangeburg. She earned her Family Nurse Practitioner and Master of Science in Nursing-Nurse Educator from Francis Marion University and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of South Carolina, Columbia.



Meagan Bennett, MSN

HopeHealth welcomed Meagan Bennett, MSN, FNP, as a family nurse practitioner at HopeHealth at Francis Marion University in September 2019. She earned a Master of Science in Nursing from Francis Marion University in Florence and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Clemson University in South Carolina. A Florence native, Bennett has experience in intensive care and family medicine.

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



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“GENERATION S”: THE IMPACT OF SICKLE CELL DISEASE



Jordin Sparks and five others touched by the disease

Despite being one of the most common genetic disorders in the world, patients with sickle cell disease frequently live their lives in the shadows—their voices going unheard, their condition often going undertreated or ignored. A new public service announcement

(PSA) campaign featuring Grammy®-nominated singer, film and Broadway star, Jordin Sparks, and five people touched by the disease, invites the public to get involved and help patients through understanding and support.

Last year, Sparks helped launch “Generation S,” a national sickle cell disease storytelling project sponsored by Novartis that encourages people touched by the disease to break their silence about the true impact of sickle cell disease. Since then, more than 750 stories about experiencing life with sickle cell disease have been submitted to JoinGenS.com.

Although sickle cell disease affects roughly 100,000 Americans, it has gone unseen by many, possibly because the general public may not understand the impact and burden of sickle cell disease. The stigma associated with the disease has left many patients under-treated and lost in the health care system.

The PSA highlights the resiliency of people touched by sickle cell disease, who are fighting the disease and starting foundations in honor of family members, despite their challenges.

Here are some ways to join Jordin Sparks and the storytellers to help educate those who may interact with people living with sickle cell disease

at work or in their personal lives:

Stay informed - What is sickle cell disease?

Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder that affects the shape of red blood cells and makes blood cells stickier than usual. This can cause blockages in blood vessels, and when the blood flow slows or gets blocked, there can be more health risks over time, like organ damage, organ failure and other long-term health complications.

It also can impact family and friends of those carrying the disease in profound ways. While one patient describes her condition as feeling like “shattered glass moving through my veins,” others share stories of watching loved ones struggle for years without being able to ease their suffering.

Communicate and interact

By sharing the PSA, you can help the public understand the burden and impact of the condition and the real life stories of those living with sickle cell disease.

The PSA is supported by Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA), Sickle Cell 101, Sick Cells, the Sickle Cell Community Consortium (SCCC) and Bold Lips for Sickle Cell—all partners to Novartis’s “Generation S.” Interact with the community, and view additional stories featured in the “Generation S” mosaic on the JoinGenS.com website.

Share your story

For Jordin Sparks, sickle cell disease is personal. She lost her young stepsister to the disease in 2018. “Many people still don’t know the impact sickle cell disease has on people living with it, and their families and friends,” Sparks said. “I hope this PSA will help change our mindset regarding sickle cell, and I am proud to lend my voice to shine a light on these stories.”

To learn more and share your story, visit www.JoinGenS.com.



October is Breast Cancer Awareness month

but for us, fighting breast cancer is on the calendar every day. We know early detection of breast cancer is key. One of the best methods of early detection is an annual mammogram. If you’re 40 or over, the American Cancer Society recommends scheduling one every year. Put this screening on your calendar and enjoy the peace-of-mind that an annual mammogram brings.

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THE A, B, Cs OF HEPATITIS AND PREVENTION

Submitted by Dr. Temujin Chavez, an infectious disease specialist



Dr. Temujin Chavez

The recent outbreak of hepatitis A in parts of South Carolina put health officials on high alert, but Hepatitis A isn't the only strain of hepatitis on the radar of infectious disease specialists.

Dr. Temujin Chavez, an infectious disease specialist at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center, says hepatitis C is on the rise among younger people in the Florence area, an increase he attributes to the opioid epidemic and increased testing. "The vast majority of my hepatitis patients have hepatitis C," he says. "Patients range from

age 20 through their 40s, but the number of young people is increasing because of opioid use."

The news isn't all bleak, and Chavez has a message for the public: "Hepatitis A, B and C are treatable and curable, and A and B are preventable with a vaccine. For these reasons, people should consider getting vaccinated."

Chavez says a blood test is available for A, B and C and urges screening for anyone who is concerned about symptoms or in a high-risk category. "Early diagnosis is important," he says. "It's important that we catch people before they develop complications."

Hepatitis is a viral infection that causes inflammation of the liver and can lead to chronic liver disease. Five viruses have been identified: A, B, C, D and E. Hepatitis C is spread through contact with blood from an infected individual. People can become infected through sharing equipment used to prepare and inject drugs. Most people who become infected lack any symptoms and, thus, develop a chronic infection that can lead to cirrhosis, or scarring of the liver. This is a permanent liver problem that persists for the person's life and may lead to liver cancer and other medical problems.

"Medications on the market can stop the virus from replicating," he says. "The treatment lasts eight weeks, and the cure rate is 97-99 percent."

Among those at risk for hepatitis C are individuals who use or have used injectable drugs, have HIV or AIDS, liver disease, have received donated blood or organs before 1992, and have been exposed to blood through a needle stick or injury with a sharp object.

Hepatitis B is primarily spread through blood or other body fluids and can also be transmitted from an infected mother to infant at birth and through injection drug use, as well as tattoo needles, unsterile medical equipment and sexual contact. Hepatitis D can be contracted only by someone with hepatitis B. Chavez says the vaccine is given in a series of three shots and is thought to give lifelong prevention. Treatment can last from six months to several years, he says.

Hepatitis A lives in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract and is spread when someone ingests the virus from objects, food or drinks contaminated by small, undetected amounts of stool from an infected person. A two-dose vaccination series for hepatitis A should be strongly considered before any planned foreign travel to prevent someone from being infected. "In the United States, it may be spread by close personal contact with someone infected. Hepatitis A doesn't cause a chronic, lifelong infection and is rarely fatal. Chavez says the vaccine, given in a single dose, is safe and has a 95 percent protection rate."

Hepatitis E is commonly found in areas that lack clean water and sanitation.

Vaccines for hepatitis A and B are available at the MUSC Health-Infectious Disease and Travel Medicine clinics at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center. And for someone diagnosed with hepatitis

A, B and C, Chavez stresses: "A, B and C are curable, but it must be diagnosed and treated early enough to prevent injury and cirrhosis."

Dr. Temujin Chavez is accepting patients at MUSC Health – Infectious Disease and MUSC Health – Travel Medicine clinics at MUSC Health – Florence Medical Center. For more information, please call 843-674-6400, or visit MUSChealth.org/Florence.

MUSC WELCOMES NEW PHYSICIANS

Submitted by MUSC Health Florence Medical Center

MUSC Health Florence Medical Center would like to welcome three new physicians: Dr. Emanuel Rivera-Rosado, Dr. Ashley Hicks and Dr. David Sherwin.



Dr. Emanuel Rivera-Rosado

Dr. Emanuel Rivera-Rosado is an orthopaedic surgeon that has joined Dr. William Refvem and Dr. Greg Palutsis at MUSC Health – Orthopaedics. He received his medical degree and completed his residency at the University of Puerto Rico in San Juan. In addition, he completed a fellowship in orthopaedic arthroscopy and sports medicine at Orthopaedic Research of Virginia.

Rivera specializes in surgical and rehabilitative services of the skeletal system with a background in orthopaedic arthroscopy and sports medicine. He is a member of the medical staff at MUSC Health Florence Medical Center and is accepting new patients. For more information please call 843-413-6835, or go to MUSChealth.org/florence.



Dr. Ashley Hicks

Dr. Ashley Hicks is a board-certified family medicine physician who is joining MUSC Health – Primary Care – Hoffmeyer at 1925 Hoffmeyer Road in Florence. She received her medical degree from Saba University School of Medicine in The Bottom, Netherland Antilles, and completed her residency in family medicine at Eastern Maine Medical Center, Bangor, Maine. Hicks is accepting new patients. For more information please call 843-679-4214, or go to MUSChealth.org/florence.



Dr. David Sherwin

Dr. David Sherwin is a board-certified family medicine physician who is joining the new MUSC Health – Primary Care – Darlington at 301 Pearl Street. He received his medical degree from Saba University School of Medicine in The Bottom, Netherland Antilles, and completed his residency in family medicine at Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor, Maine. Sherwin is accepting new patients. For more information please call 843-413-6891, or go to MUSChealth.org/florence.

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MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN THE WORKPLACE

Submitted by Susan Carter, LPC, LPC Supervisor, Director of Performance Improvement and Education, Pee Dee Mental Health Florence



Susan Carter

The importance of addressing mental health challenges in the workplace is becoming increasingly clear as the number of adults exhibiting symptoms of conditions such as depression, anxiety and attention deficit disorder has risen significantly, both in the U.S. and globally. Left untreated, these conditions can wreak havoc on an individual's relationships, productivity and physical well-being.

Statistics documenting the prevalence of mental health conditions in the workplace strongly suggest the importance of addressing this public health challenge immediately. One in four people experiences at least one mental health disorder in their lifetime, according to the World Health Organization.

For example, a national study found that 18 percent of Americans ages 15-54 who were employed said that they experienced symptoms of a mental health disorder in the previous month (Centers for Disease Control). Mental health conditions impact one's ability to work more than any other health challenge. Almost half of all long-term sickness is due to mental health problems. Each year, more than 4 million Americans (18 percent of the U.S. population) experience some type of mental health problem. Globally, depression and other mental health conditions are on the rise. Mental illness can affect anyone, regardless of age, wealth, status or apparent disposition.

Despite the universal susceptibility to mental health conditions, there is a stigma surrounding these challenges that often influences workers to hide their suffering. Employees report that they do not disclose mental health problems because they fear doing so would cause them to be treated and looked at differently by their supervisor and co-workers. Uninformed managers may accept the stereotype that mentally ill employees are prone to violence, for instance, even though evidence suggests the opposite. In fact, those with mental health challenges are more likely to be victims of violent crime rather than the perpetrators. Employees with mental illness are as loyal and dedicated as their colleagues.

Employees struggling with mental health issues may demonstrate signs and symptoms that supervisors and coworkers need to be aware of so that they can support them and provide linkage to mental health resources when appropriate. Common signs include repeated absences, personality changes (becoming more withdrawn or irritable), cognitive changes (forgetfulness or careless mistakes), disregard for workplace rules and resignations or terminations.

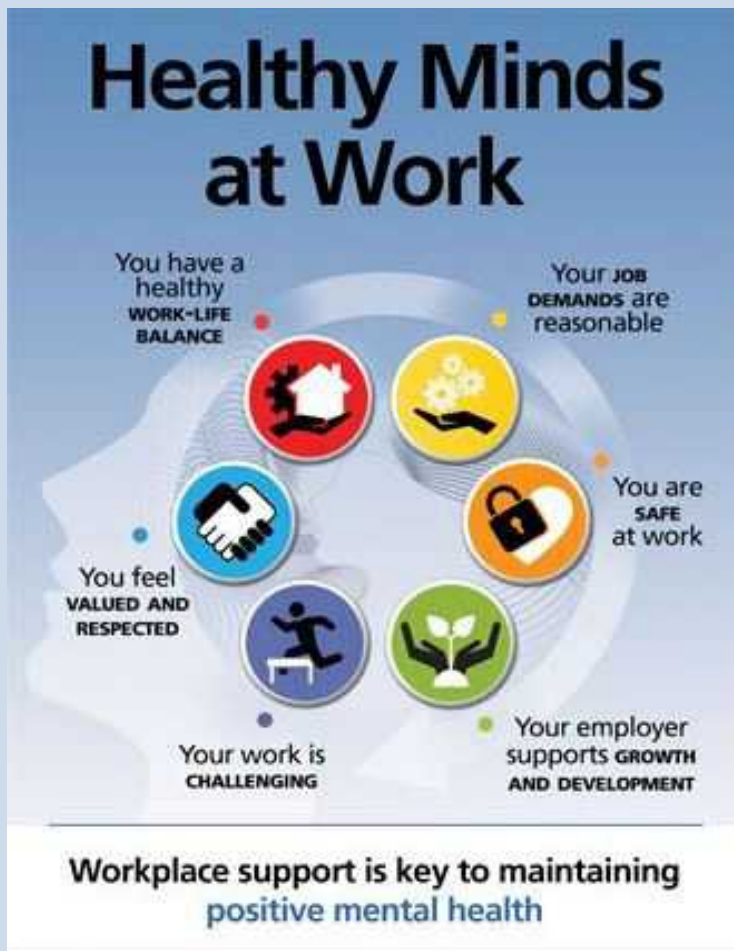
Although the signs of mental health issues are often similar, common mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety are clinically identified by unique symptoms. Depression, which has become the world's second leading cause of disability, affects about six percent of employees in any given year. In the workplace, this condition is likely to manifest in unproductive behaviors including nervousness, restlessness and irritability. Physical complaints are also common with depression; employees may seem preoccupied with aches and pains and complain of fatigue (which may be due to insomnia). Personality changes, such as increased passivity, withdrawal, aimlessness and being unproductive may accompany depression. Depressed workers may exhibit impaired judgment and/or cloudy decision-making.

Similar to depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) also often results workplace absences. Anxious employees may appear

restless, tired, have difficulty concentrating, or worry excessively. They may require constant reassurance about their performance. Coworkers may notice physical symptoms such as complaints of frequent migraines or stomach issues or irritability in the employee. If not well managed, workplace related mental health issues can lead to decreased productivity performance, and morale.

Economic consequences of mental health issues as well as individual costs in terms of decreased life satisfaction clearly demonstrate the urgent need for treatment. Effective self-care strategies include mindfulness, meditation, taking breaks away from the worksite (e.g. at lunch), and exposure to sunlight. Adequate sleep (at least seven to nine hours per night) and healthy eating are additional self-care strategies that can ameliorate minor to moderate anxiety and depression. For symptoms lasting six months or more, assessment and treatment by a professional counselor and/or physician are recommended. Community mental health centers offer assessments and counseling and no physician referral is needed.

Workplace attitudes toward mental health conditions need to change so that employees will feel safe reaching out for support and treatment resources. One way to initiate this attitude change is by creating awareness in the workplace. Encourage employees to reach out to others who appear to be struggling by gently observing that the employee: "You're not your usual self." Explain that co-workers are allowed to help out an employee when they recognize that someone is in distress. Employees who need more help should reach out to their Employee Assistance Program or local community mental health center. By creating a stigma-free workplace, employees and their employers will benefit from increased productivity and workplace satisfaction and success.





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NEW PREDIABETES ASSESSMENT TEST

Articles submitted by Donna Tracy, Communications Coordinator HopeHealth



Anita Longan

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a new Prediabetes Risk Test this summer that can better help people determine their health needs. The updated test means the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and CDC now use the same risk test that:

- has stronger calls to action
- has seven easy-to-understand questions
- includes a results page and explanations that can be emailed and printed

“The majority of people who have prediabetes have no idea that their blood sugar is higher than it should be and that it is putting them at risk for type 2 diabetes,” said Anita Longan, registered dietitian nutritionist at the HopeHealth Diabetes & Nutrition Institute in Florence. “Taking the prediabetes risk test is a first step to recognizing that it’s time to lead a healthier lifestyle. This simple quiz takes just a minute to do but can inspire a person to make changes that can impact their health for a lifetime!”

The assessment test also provides an opportunity to share the tool with friends and family and is available both online at cdc.gov/prediabetes/take the test and as a printable pdf version.

“Taking the test and knowing your risk for prediabetes gives you the opportunity to take a proactive approach to addressing your health needs,” said Longan. “You can start an exercise program, talk with a nutritionist, or enroll in a structured program such as the National Diabetes Prevention Program to help make lifestyle changes.”

Longan said that making lifestyle changes, such as getting more physical activity, eating healthier and losing a little weight, can delay type 2 diabetes for 10 years or completely prevent the disease from developing.

Find out if it’s time for you to make changes. Take the quiz!

SPONSORSHIP FOR GOLF CLASSIC



Jeremy Straus drives the ball onto the green during the 2018 HopeHealth Golf Classic at Wyboo Golf Club in Manning. This year’s event will be held Nov. 21.

The third annual HopeHealth Golf Classic will be held on Nov. 21 at 11 a.m. at the Wyboo Golf Club, 2565 Players Course Dr., Manning, S.C. 29102.

Several sponsorship opportunities are available, including:

- Gold (\$5,000)
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- Bronze (\$1,500)
- Award Reception Sponsorship (\$1,200)
- Lunch Sponsor (\$750)
- Individual hole sponsorship (\$300)

All proceeds benefit the HopeHealth Compassionate Care Fund established to assist patients with unmet needs such as the cost of vision appointments, eyeglasses, specialty care, surgery, prescription drugs and emergency assistance.

The one-day tournament is a four-man captain’s choice and is open to all with a shotgun start at 11:45 a.m. Tournament fees are \$75 per player, and the registration deadline is Nov. 14. Fees include 18 holes of golf with a cart, a barbecue lunch and an awards social at the Deercreek Meeting Center. Mulligans will be for sale and awards include the longest drive and closest to the pin.

For more information on sponsorships or to register for the tournament, email Scherrie Cogdill at scogdill@hope-health.org.

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COMMUNITY ACCESS TO FOOD AND ACTIVITY by Adalia Ellis



Wanda Green and Weatherly Thomas at the Lee County Clemson Extension office

BISHOPVILLE - Obesity is a national epidemic, causing higher medical costs and a lower quality of life. Obesity is a contributing cause of many other health problems, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some types of cancer. Contributing

factors in our society include food and physical activity environment, education and skills, and food marketing and promotion.

Since 2014, CDC has funded land grant colleges and universities to address this national epidemic by working with existing county cooperative extension and outreach services in predominantly rural areas. The current High Obesity Program (HOP) funds 15 land grant universities to work with community extension services in counties that have more than 40 percent of adults with obesity. Residents of these communities may have less access to healthy foods and fewer opportunities to be physically active. Unfortunately, being healthy is not just about individual choices.

A core principle of public health is that every person should be able to reach his or her full health potential. Despite this, health gaps remain among racial and ethnic minority groups. South Carolina has the tenth highest rate of obesity in the nation. In S.C. three counties have more than a 40 percent adult obesity rate. Those counties are Hampton, Lee and Marion. In those counties, Clemson Cooperative Extension Service Rural Health and Nutrition Team will work at the state and local levels to increase access to healthier food and opportunities for physical activity by using

proven strategies.

Weatherly Thomas, who works in Lee and Marion counties shares that the Rural Health and Nutrition Team will work with community leaders and residents to improve nutrition and physical activity and to prevent and control obesity by changing policies, systems and environments. Policy, systems and environmental change are a way of modifying the environment to make healthy choices practical and available to all community members. By doing so, communities can help address health issues like obesity.

Weatherly states that some examples of what they plan would be working with local leaders and residents to address implementing community and transportation plans to support safe and accessible physical activity by connecting sidewalks, paths, recreation centers, homes, schools and parks. "We would make everyday destinations easier to navigate for all community residents. Building active and walkable communities can help support local economies, result in less air pollution and create more cohesive communities. More examples would be increasing access to healthier affordable food retail, promoting farm to pre-school programs to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables, installing signs that promote use of walking and biking paths as well as increasing the number of parks, greenways and trails in the community," she said.

A policy, systems, and environmental approach looks to go beyond implementing programs and adjusts actual structures in which we work, live and play. A policy change occurs at legislative or organizational level and would include passing new laws, ordinances and regulations. These strategies are designed with sustainability in mind.

For more information please contact Clemson Cooperative Extension Rural Health and Nutrition Team: Lee County Office: Weatherly Thomas or Wanda Green, 803-484-5416; Marion County Office: Tabitha D. James, 843-423-8285; or Hampton County Office, 803-943-3427.

AFIB: DO YOU HAVE IT AND NOT KNOW IT?

Submitted by Dr. Sam Rahman, Interventional Cardiologist, MUSC Health – Cardiology



Dr. Sam Rahman

If your heart flutters, it might be more serious than you think. The American Stroke Association reports 2.7 million people are living with atrial fibrillation (AFib), and many more don't know they have it. Atrial fibrillation is caused by an irregularity in the top part of the heart, or atrium. Instead of the atrium beating regularly, it quivers very quickly. The problem is that it can lead to heart failure, blood clots or stroke.

AFib is not a terminal condition, but it is more common than people think. The older we get, the more likely it will develop. Advances in technology to diagnose AFib are giving patients and physicians more options in how to manage it. The first step in diagnosis is recording an AFib event. It's important to first find out how frequent the patient feels fluttering in the heart. Based on what the patient tells me, we can choose the appropriate monitoring device.

If you have several heart fluttering episodes per day, we could use a short-term monitoring device. These devices are relatively small, attached to electrodes on the outside of the body, and carried for one day up to two weeks. This external monitor is a good option if the patient has two to three episodes daily. Along with wearing the monitors we ask the patient to write down the time of the episode in an event diary. Later on, the diary helps the cardiologist narrow down the time frame of the episode when sifting through the recorded heart data.

If a patient has very infrequent episodes of AFib a loop recorder could be a good option. It's called a Loop recorder because, as it records if no event is detected, it deletes the recording and records a new "loop" continuously. The loop recorder is implanted under the skin and is about the size of a USB thumb drive. Only one small incision is made to install it, and the battery can last up to three years. Even then, it is possible no episode will be detected during those three years.

The loop recorder can be very convenient for the patient because the device will electronically notify the cardiologist's office if an event occurred. It has a wonderful ability to detect significant events as soon as they happen, if they happen.

Once AFib is detected it's important to eliminate reversible causes of it. Some of these causes are thyroid disease, alcohol consumption or sleep apnea, heart rhythm control, heart rate control, preventing blood clots with blood thinners. Blood thinner medications are prescribed because they reduce the chances of having a stroke.

Which method is best to manage AFib is still up for some debate. Heart rhythm therapy involves attempting to restore the normal rhythm of the heart by delivering electrical shocks. Radiofrequency ablation, or catheter ablation, involves inserting a catheter into a peripheral blood vessel and advancing it to the heart to eliminate the abnormal signals and restore normal rhythm. Even with ablation there is no permanent, complete cure for AFib, but there is hope in minimizing it. The best-case scenario is you are able to maintain normal sinus rhythm.

AFib by itself doesn't kill people. It's very well tolerated by the body. Many patients don't show any signs, which is called as asymptomatic. They can live their entire life without having any problems.

Heart quivering or fluttering is the most common form of irregular heartbeat. If you think you might have atrial fibrillation, it's important to contact your physician. If you experience chest pain or pressure, it may be a medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 immediately.

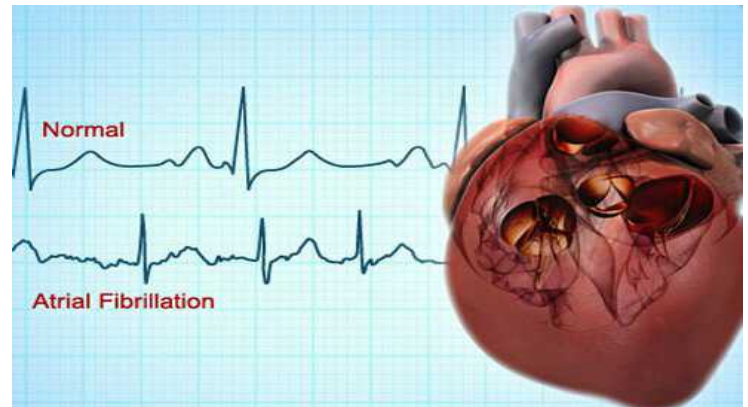
Sometimes people with AFib have no symptoms and their condition

is only detectable upon physical examination. Still, others may experience one or more of the following symptoms:

- General fatigue
- Rapid and irregular heartbeat
- Fluttering or "thumping" in the chest
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath and anxiety
- Weakness
- Faintness or confusion
- Fatigue when exercising
- Sweating

*from the American Stroke Association (www.stroke.org)

Dr. Sam Rahman is an interventional cardiologist at MUSC Health – Cardiology and is a member of the medical staff at MUSC Health – Florence Medical Center. He is accepting new patients. For more information call 843-674-4787, or go to MUSCHealth.org/florence.



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CHANGE YOUR LANGUAGE TO HELP OTHERS IN PAIN Submitted by Dr. Will Hunter, Clinical Psychologist HopeHealth



Dr. Will Hunter

Words have power. They can convey compassion and hope, or they can stigmatize, judge and dismiss. The language of suicide has been changing, and studies continue to show that the words we use can influence patient engagement in treatment, trust in providers and the disclosure of suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Grieving families and loved ones are also affected by the choice of words given to their experience. A negative impact can be created due to someone's avoidance or lack of words to those who

are in pain. Therefore, it is important to consider your awareness and readiness to use your words in a way that can uplift and encourage someone who might be in need.

Here are examples of words to keep in mind, recommended by the American Association of Suicidology.

These are encouraged phrases that are objective and remove negative connotations or stigma:

- “Died by/from suicide,” “took/ended their life,” and “suicide death”
- “Suicide attempt” and “attempted to end their life”
- “Suicidal thoughts” and “suicidal behaviors”

These are discouraged phrases that can stigmatize, promote misconceptions or add to mental health discrimination:

- “Committed suicide”
- The word “commit” can be strongly associated with criminality, sin or moral failing. Did you know that this phrase refers to a past time when it was illegal to kill oneself?

- “Successful” and “completed” suicide
- “Unsuccessful” and “failed” suicide attempt
- Suicidal “gesture” and “threat”

If changing language can help those in pain to ask for help, and can show respect and dignity to survivors and the bereaved, then it's worth our effort. Keep these suggestions in mind as we continue to build our awareness, readiness, and response to individuals and families affected by suicide.

Dr. Will Hunter joined HopeHealth in September 2018 as a clinical psychologist in Behavioral Health Services at HopeHealth on Palmetto Street in Florence. He has received training in cognitive processing therapy for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and enjoys working with veterans. His clinical interests include the diagnostic assessment of complex mental health issues, crisis intervention and risk assessment, and the treatment of severe and chronic mental illness, including schizophrenia-spectrum disorders and bipolar disorder.



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Participants in HopeHealth's 2018 AIDS Walk stroll through downtown Florence. The annual event is held on the first Saturday of December to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS.

More than three decades have passed since AIDS first captured global attention and put a name to the epidemic that terrified communities. No one knew what was causing AIDS. No one knew how it was transmitted. Task forces set out to determine risk factors. Specialized treatment clinics opened. Congressional hearings were held. Legislation for research was drafted. And people continued to die.

In May 1983, researchers discovered the human immunodeficiency virus, or HIV, that destroys immune cells, known as CD4 T lymphocytes or CD4 cells. Healthy individuals typically have 500 to 1,600 of these cells in a single milliliter of blood. Below 200, the HIV infection has progressed to AIDS. At this point, the virus has so weakened the body that opportunistic infections and cancers can rapidly take hold.

An AIDS diagnosis in the 1980s was a prognosis for death. Available treatments were harsh on the body and required a rigid regimen that included a minimum of 18 pills per day. For many, it also meant rejection and abandonment by their communities and families.

Today, much has changed, both in prognosis of the disease and in treatment, and an individual diagnosed with HIV and in compliance with their treatment plan can expect to live a full, typical life. The development of rapid HIV testing allows for fast, accurate HIV-status test results without a specialized clinical setting, and improvements in medicine has reduced treatment plans to a single pill a day. These pills are a combination of three medicines from more than 20 drugs, including antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, in about eight classes. Each attacks the HIV virus in different ways, and the specific combinations prescribed to an individual are based on a genosure test that determines their specific HIV strain's drug resistance.

Even though treatment for HIV/AIDS has come so far, access and awareness remain hurdles for many communities. In the State of the Union Address on February 5, 2019, President Donald J. Trump announced a new initiative to end the HIV epidemic in the United States within 10 years by dedicating funds to the areas most impacted by new HIV diagnoses, including the entirety of South Carolina. The "Ending the HIV Epidemic: A Plan for America" initiative begins in fiscal year 2020 with a goal to reduce new diagnoses in the United States by 75 percent in five years and by 90 percent by 2030.

To combat the fear and stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS, World AIDS Day was established in 1988 with a three-fold goal: to unite communities, to celebrate and support people living with HIV/AIDS and to honor the more than 35 million people who have lost their lives to the disease. World AIDS Day is held Dec. 1 each year to bring awareness about the disease, and HopeHealth commemorates the day with the annual AIDS Walk in Florence on the first Saturday in December.

HopeHealth was established in 1991 as a grass-roots support group to help those diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and combat the fear and stigma surrounding the disease. HopeHealth continues to organize awareness events to continue the conversation about HIV and AIDS, decrease stigma and provide support to individuals living with the disease. Our Infectious Diseases Department works closely with our community health programs to allow for coordinated care across specialties, including pain management, substance abuse, dental care, mental health and primary care.

More than 1.1 million in the US are living with HIV infection and, of those, one in seven do not know they have the virus. Open conversation on the HIV epidemic still has a long way to go, especially in southern states, which, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), have the highest number of people living with HIV and account for more than 50 percent of new HIV diagnoses in the U.S. in 2017.

SIDE BAR FACTS

Fastest growing population rates for HIV infection? Young men having sex with men and college-age kids.

- HIV has claimed more than 35 million lives globally since 1981.
- In 2017, 38,739 people received an HIV diagnosis in the U.S. and territories.
- Of the 38,739 new HIV diagnoses in the U.S in 2017, 19,968 (52 percent) were in the South.
- There were approximately 36.7 million people living with HIV at the end of 2015.
- With effective treatment, people with HIV can enjoy healthy, productive lives.
- Global estimates indicate only 54 percent of people with HIV know their status.
- Between 2000 and 2015, rates of new HIV infections fell by 35 percent, and AIDS-related deaths fell by 28 percent.
- Expanding effective antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to all people living with HIV and expanding prevention choices can help avert 21 million AIDS-related deaths and 28 million new infections by 2030.
- In South Carolina, 20.7 people per 100,000 are living with HIV and the lifetime risk of being diagnosed with HIV ranks 10th in the nation
- Columbia, South Carolina, ranked 13th in the nation for highest infection rates per capita



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Evening testing hours by appointment from 4 - 8 pm

HopeHealth in Manning
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HopeHealth in Aiken
150 University Parkway, Aiken
Mon – Thurs: 9 am – 4 pm

HopeHealth in Orangeburg
1857 Joe S. Jeffords Hwy, Orangeburg
Mon – Thurs: 9 am – 4 pm



hope-health.org

WHY AM I SO FULL?

Submitted by Roger Polsky, NP MUSC Health - Gastroenterology



Roger Polsky, NP

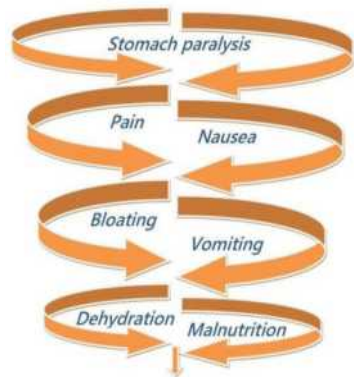
Gastroparesis, or delayed gastric emptying, is a condition in which the stomach takes longer than it should to pass its contents to the small intestine. This “stomach paralysis” results in a host of uncomfortable symptoms that can greatly reduce the quality of life for someone with the condition.

Signs and Symptoms

Gastroparesis symptoms can range from mild to severe, depending on the individual. The most common symptoms are nausea, vomiting and feeling full early after eating just a few bites during a meal.

Since food doesn't move through the stomach at a normal pace, many patients report feeling full and bloated after eating. This feeling can result in inadequate food intake, which can lead to malnutrition and vitamin and mineral deficiencies. The nausea and vomiting in some patients is so severe it makes getting the right nutrition difficult. Also, food remaining in the stomach for extended periods of time can ferment and cause bacterial overgrowth. This can lead to the food hardening into masses called bezoars, which cause nausea and vomiting and can lead to a stomach obstruction. In some cases, the bezoars can block food's passageway into the small intestine.

Causes



Gastroparesis

This can lead to a vicious cycle of delayed gastric emptying and trouble controlling glucose levels.

The American Diabetes Association says people with diabetes and gastroparesis may need to administer insulin more often. This means they must administer insulin after eating, instead of before, and closely monitor blood sugar levels throughout the day.

A January 2013 study published in the American Journal of Gastroenterology estimates the prevalence of gastroparesis is approximately five percent in type 1 diabetes patients and one percent in type 2 patients.

Medical providers diagnose gastroparesis in several ways. If patients show symptoms consistent with the disease, they're likely to first undergo an upper endoscopy. This rules out any mechanical obstruction or ulcer. If no obstruction is present, the next step is usually a scintigraphy. This is a diagnostic test considered to be the gold standard for measuring the rate at which solids and liquids empty from the stomach in a four-hour period. During this test, patients consume solid foods and liquids with a small amount of radioactive material, and examiners identify the rate of gastric emptying at one-hour intervals. If the study is positive, which is usually defined by gastric retention of more than 10 percent in four hours, then that would help to confirm

our diagnosis.

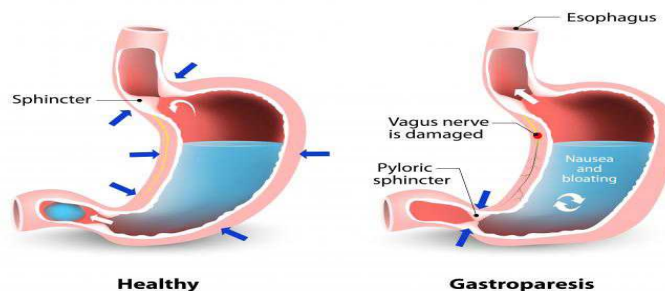
Food choices are just as important as reducing the amount of food eaten at each meal. I emphasize low-fat foods because high-fat foods have a longer gastric emptying time. In addition, low-fiber foods are recommended because fiber is known to slow gastric emptying. Gastroenterologists also suggest patients eat low-residue foods such as refined breads, white rice and white pasta, plus cooked vegetables and canned fruit because they're better tolerated than fresh fruits and vegetables. It is also recommended patients avoid carbonated beverages, alcohol and smoking, which can slow down gastric emptying.

Roger Polsky is a nurse practitioner at MUSC Health – Gastroenterology located on the campus of MUSC Health – Florence Medical Center. He is accepting new patients. For more information call 843-674-1530, or visit muschealth.org/florence.

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1. Gastroparesis. American College of Gastroenterology website. <http://patients.gi.org/topics/gastroparesis>. Updated December 2012

GASTROPARESIS



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Bethea
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Bethea is a vibrant retirement community that embraces senior adults from all walks of life.

Residents enjoy varied interests from baking, sewing, and reading to thrilling adventures like skydiving and high ropes courses. More importantly, residents live as family in sharing meals, life, and the relationships that deepen among the residents and staff every day. A strong sense of family is evident, and current residents include a daughter and her mom who call Bethea home. You may also see visiting grandchildren enjoying the campus with a game of billiards or water volleyball at the aquatic center with their grandparents.

Bethea is more than just another retirement community... it is a ministry with a mission to serve senior adults with compassionate care so all they serve may thrive. Thanks to a thoughtful bequest by Dr. and Mrs. Percy Betha and the continued support of South Carolina Baptists, Betha Retirement Community opened its doors in 1960 and continues as a community of the SC Baptist Ministries of Aging. As a continuing care retirement community (CCRC), Betha offers a full continuum of living options for residents so their changing health needs can be met without requiring them to relocate.

Residents of all faiths are welcome. On campus, Betha Retirement Community has its own fully constituted Southern Baptist church that is open to residents and their families but also to the surrounding community as well. Dr. Jeff Cockrell, a beloved resident favorite, leads daily devotions and Wednesday and Sunday services and also provides pastoral care throughout the week.

Voted and recognized as Best of the Pee Dee for long-term care in 2019, Betha Retirement Community's tireless commitment to becoming better every day has no ceiling for providing the best living environment and care for residents. Executive Director Ben Spurling intentionally fosters an atmosphere of continued service and purpose in the lives of Betha's residents. Many current residents chose Betha because they served as pastors, missionaries, or very active church members and have a passion to continue in service, even in retirement. Many of Betha's residents volunteer in prison ministry, homeless shelters, college ministry, the local children's home, or with other residents.

Betha is also renovating and expanding its campus to better suit the needs of residents. In 2018, Betha Retirement Community expanded its dining options to include the Betha Bistro with a brick oven so residents can en-

joy burgers, hotdogs, sandwiches and pizza to satisfy those snack cravings. On August 27, 2019 Betha broke ground on a brand new state-of-the-art 60,000 square foot nursing and rehab center that is scheduled to open in 2020. The new nursing center will accommodate both long-term care and short-term rehabilitation needs. It will feature all private rooms, a 3,000 square foot rehabilitation gym, and a household design with residential living, activity and dining spaces, and access to outdoor courtyards built for the special needs of these residents. Executive Director Ben Spurling shares, "We are excited about what God is doing in our ministry and we are confident this expansion will enrich the lives of our residents as well as the surrounding communities of Florence and Darlington."



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MINDFULNESS AND ITS PROVEN IMPACT ON LONELINESS

Maybe you know someone who stands by taking five minutes each morning to meditate or finds time after lunch to quiet his or her mind and focus on breathing. Whatever the method may be, incorporating “mindfulness” practices into your life can have a wide range of positive health benefits like improving your memory, sleep and immune system; reducing stress and feelings of loneliness; and increasing compassion toward others and yourself.

Mindfulness means taking time to pay attention to yourself, your thoughts and feelings. Read on to learn how you can put mindfulness into practice in your life to help improve your overall health.

How to make mindfulness a routine part of your day.

* Find five to ten minutes each day to sit quietly and focus on your breath. (Helpful hint: Put your phone on silent or in another room so you can concentrate.) Take the time to notice where your mind goes and how your body is feeling. You just might find that this helps you focus and prioritize your day.

* Before you go to bed take time to focus on the good things that happened that day. Write your thoughts down in a journal. Writing them down can help you deliberately recognize the positive, even on a tough day.

* Search for “mindfulness apps” on your smartphone or tablet that lead you in a mindfulness exercise. For many people, using an app is an easy way to remain consistent with the practice. And many of these apps are free.

Feeling lonely? Mindfulness can help.

Mindfulness has been shown to help older adults overcome a silent but urgent health issue: loneliness. It is estimated that more than half of adults age 65 and over regularly experience moderate to severe loneliness. Loneliness is characterized by a marked difference between someone’s desired companionship and actual relationships. Through unique studies conducted by UnitedHealthcare and AARP, researchers are applying the techniques of

mindfulness to help combat loneliness in older adults.

Loneliness poses a serious threat to the quality of life for older adults. It is linked to negative health outcomes such as higher risk of dementia, mortality and disability.

“The health risk of chronic loneliness, in older adults, is equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day and has a greater impact on mortality than obesity,” said Dr. Charlotte Yeh, M.D., chief medical officer, AARP Services Inc. “That is why UnitedHealthcare and AARP Services Inc. are collaborating to identify actionable solutions, geared for any individual across the spectrum of loneliness.”

Researchers looked at whether mindfulness interventions, like breath awareness, self-compassion and kindness exercises could positively impact a person’s optimism and quality of life—all factors that help reduce loneliness. Conclusions were encouraging: mindfulness activities were shown to decrease loneliness among older adults. The research demonstrated that mindfulness reduced stress and improved memory, sleep, the immune system, resiliency and compassion for self and others.

Although loneliness is complex and challenging to address, a mindfulness practice may help you live your best life.

3 STEPS TO GET CLOSER TO A SECURE RETIREMENT



Did you know nearly 1 in 3 people think they're more likely to learn Bigfoot is real than to save enough to retire comfortably? That's according to a recent survey from AARP and the Ad Council.

But successfully saving for retirement doesn't have to be a fantasy-or scary. Chances are, you're better at saving than you think. Have you put kids through college? Bought a house? Purchased a car or two? You're probably better at achieving financial goals than you give yourself credit for. The careful planning and savings skills you've already used can help you reach your next big financial goal: a secure retirement.

The right tools make it easier. You can get started today with a free online resource from AARP where you can create your personal action plan in just a few minutes. Meet your friendly digital retirement coach, Avo, at AceYourRetirement.org.

"In just three minutes you can get answers to a few simple questions, plus personalized tips and saving strategies," said Debra Whitman, AARP executive vice president and chief public policy officer. "The to-do list format is effective and works for any age."

The sooner you start, the sooner you'll have peace of mind and a concrete plan. While everyone's situation is unique, here are steps you can take today.

1. Take advantage of your employer's retirement benefits. If your workplace offers a 401(k) or another savings plan, make sure you're getting the most bang for your buck. If your employer matches part of your contribution, aim to contribute at least enough to get the full match.

"It's basically free money for your future, and it can be a huge way to amplify the amount you're able to save for yourself," said Whitman.

If possible, consider boosting your contribution past that employer match by a percentage or two to increase your savings even more. A long-term goal might be to set aside 10-15 percent of your income as a contribution to your 401(k).

2. Try to pay down debt. No matter your situation, reducing debt is always smart, as debt you carry eats away at savings you're trying to set aside. Check interest rates on your current mortgages, car loans, home equity loans, parent loans or credit cards. Consider working toward paying down loans or cards with the highest interest rates first. Call your credit card companies and ask for a lower interest rate. Some debt may be eligible for refinancing, so consider that option to lower interest rates.

3. Have a family conversation. When it comes to any big financial decision, it helps if everyone is on the same page. You and your spouse could create a budget and incremental goals to work on together. Talk to your adult children about how paying down your debt and saving for retirement is a priority and that helping them with their education, housing or other responsibilities is a secondary goal.

These goals are within your control, and you can make progress if you start small, start today and plan. For more information, visit AceYourRetirement.org.

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Stay Connected:



HELP AGING FAMILY MEMBERS WITH CHRONIC CONDITIONS



As we get older, the ones we love inevitably age too. For many, there comes a time when you are no longer just a son, daughter or family member. You're a caregiver. Ensuring your aging parent or loved one is able to manage and afford his or her medical

treatments can have an enormous impact on his or her health and quality of life.

Here are five simple ways you can help aging family members manage their treatment so you can live healthier and happier lives.

1. Meet with their doctor or healthcare provider.

Building a relationship with their healthcare provider will help lay the groundwork for future communication and care management. Before attending an appointment, talk to your parent or family members about their needs and concerns, make a list of the medications they are taking and the renewals they may need and determine together what you'd like to accomplish. If drug costs are a financial burden, don't be shy about asking for samples or if there are less expensive generic equivalents available.

2. Check in with the pharmacist.

Connecting with your parent or family member's pharmacist is an excellent way to become familiar with his or her treatment plan and ask questions about potential side effects and interactions of prescribed drugs. Be sure to ask about mail order options offered by some insurance

plans and specialty pharmacies, which can save money and time by delivering a three-month supply of medication directly to his or her home.

3. De-clutter the medicine cabinet.

It is common for those struggling with chronic or multiple illnesses, particularly in old age, to have multiple prescriptions from different healthcare providers, each with complicated regimens that may make it difficult to keep track of what pills to take and when. You can help by ensuring their medicines are organized, accessible and stored appropriately.

Auditing their medicine cabinet is a good place to start. Make note of anything that is running low, and order refills when needed. You can visit fda.gov for information on how to appropriately dispose of medications that have expired or are no longer necessary.

A pill organizer box can help keep track of complicated treatment schedules and reduce the risk of missing a dose or doses. Free pill reminder apps, such as Medisafe Pill and Med Reminder, allow you to manage the accounts of multiple family members.

4. Review Medicare or insurance coverage.

Diagnoses and treatments can frequently change. Therefore, it's important to ensure your parent or family member's Medicare or insurance plan still meets his or her needs. It is worth paying particular attention to the prescription drug plan, which can differ year to year. Online tools, like The National Council on Aging's Benefits Checkup Tool and Medicare Interactive sponsored by the Medicare Rights Center can help you review benefits and find the best option for him or her.

He or she may also be eligible for other Medicare programs, like a Low-Income Subsidy, that can lower out-of-pocket costs.



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A PRODUCER, NOT JUST A CONSUMER



Dr. De'Angela Haynes

HARTSVILLE—On June 24, 1979, De'Angela Haynes was born to unwed, teenage parents: the late Bertha Mae Haynes (nicknamed “Pig”) of Marion and Oliver Taylor of Columbia. By the age of 19, her mother had already miscarried twins and given birth to Haynes’ older sister, Donna. She would later give birth to another daughter. “Pig’s” father, who was raising her, died when she was only four years old. He was a corporal in the U.S. Army. Her mother, Martha Evans-Haynes, died when she was a young adult.

She was reared by a family who were not biologically related to her but who would be instrumental in not only raising her, but also two of her children. Haynes was one of those children. The family lived in a trailer park and project housing in Marion, but it was the stick-built home on Jackson Street where the blended family lived the greater part of Haynes’ childhood. Her modest upbringing would serve as the impetus to the success Haynes would realize later in her life.

Growing up in a rural community, Haynes gained an appreciation for the interconnectedness of communities, especially the church. At an early age, she knew God placed a call on her life. It was in the pews of Mount Pisgah Missionary Baptist Church where she was first introduced to the word of God and first became aware of his spirit. There, she also sang on the Sunbeam Choir. At the age of 15, Haynes said her life was changed forever. She joined the gospel choir and later the Black History Choir at Marion High School under the direction of Michael Blue. In this class, she learned the history of gospel music and also began to discover many other gifts she possessed: an artist, athlete, writer, musician and more importantly, a follower of Jesus Christ. In her sophomore year, she surrendered her life unto the Lord Jesus Christ and received salvation. From 15 years old unto the present, Bishop Michael Blue and his wife Malinda Blue have been and still are very influential in her life.

It was also at an early age that Haynes realized her leadership ability. Her “Flipping Foxes” coach at Easterling Primary School, who later became Marion High School varsity women’s basketball coach, Tim Perkins, would be very instrumental in her life, even as she played basketball in high school. Haynes received several All-State and regional honors and MVP awards. In her senior year, she was chosen as one of the North-South All-Star Players. It was First Sgt. Irish Stackhouse who helped Haynes hone her leadership skills by allowing her to be a squad leader, platoon leader, drill team commander and later battalion commander for the JROTC program at Marion High School. She was well-respected by her classmates, teachers and other staff members. Many of them were drawn to her because of her kindness, respect and love for people.

Her Uncle Harold Grant, who was also a U.S. Army veteran, encouraged Haynes to pursue her interests. When she lived on Jackson Street, he built Haynes’ first basketball goal out of a rim from an old bicycle tire and nailed it to a tree. Then, one Christmas she was given an authentic basketball goal, which was placed on a tree in the backyard near the chicken coop. After the family moved into a brick home on Mill Street, there were several basketball goals raised for her because he realized how much she loved the sport. Her Uncle Harold would even challenge her concerning her techniques of shooting jump shots, free throws and layups. His encouragement and that of so many others drove her to excel.

Haynes is presently serving as the Primary and Intermediate

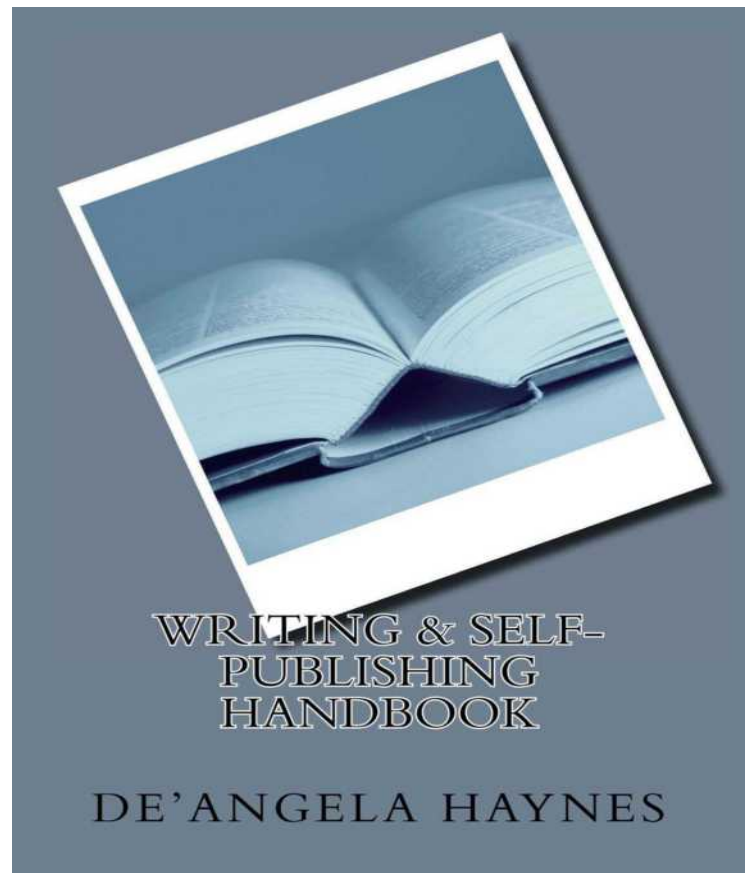
activities coordinator at Pee Dee Math Science and Technology Academy in Bishopville. She received her high school diploma from Marion High School in 1997. She earned the bachelor’s degree from Francis Marion University in 2006. She received her first master’s degrees from Webster University in human resources development in 2009 and her second master’s degree from Webster University in information technology management in the fall of 2012. On July 25, 2015, Haynes received her PhD, philosophy in management, from The University of Southampton. She has eight years of contracted military for the U.S. Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserves—honorable discharge.



Encourager Super Hero

Fulfilling a lifelong dream to work with children, Haynes served as a librarian with The Drs. Bruce & Lee Library in Florence. In this role, she coordinated functions related to reference services, including the review of existing services; analysis and development of new services; search and retrieval on behalf of patrons; and assisting patrons with self-guided research. A distinguished children’s advocate, Haynes worked in the children’s book mobile and served as a youth leader at her church, The Door of Hope Christian Church in Marion. Today, she encourages people of

all ages to follow their dreams no matter how great. She has self-published books, with her first book, “Encourage Yourself in the Lord” (2010), which is a prototype for action figure the Encourager. She is also the designer of four pairs of shoes with Alive Shoes Company and is a small business owner of Encourager97, LLC, where she serves as a consultant to help others become self-published authors. Haynes believes that she should be a producer and not just a consumer so that she can continue to make influence and impact.





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tenacious G|R|A|C|E

On any given day, they have learned to expect the unexpected to come through the doors of their office. Some days it may be a bewildered mother with her three children and all of her belongings loaded in a van because she has nowhere to go and no place to lay their heads that night. Other days it may be a young woman trying to better her life, to stay clean and sober, wanting to work and be independent, but unable to find employment because no one is willing to give her a second chance. Yes, there are many tears shed in that little office, but there are victories too. On the good days, bright and smiling faces walk through that door and announce they found employment or secured safe housing for themselves. Sometimes they just stop by to check in and report that life is good. Tears are sometimes shed on those days as well, but they are tears of joy.



Cheri Jordan - Inmate Support Leader

Tenacious Grace, a Florence nonprofit, was founded by Cookie Cawthon in 2014 and began as a traditional women's ministry. Its vision was to "engage hurting women from all walks of life with the message of truth, strength, and hope in Jesus." In the beginning, its leaders led Bible studies, were guest speakers at women's events and were active in the lives of the women within their community. What Cawthon quickly realized, however, was that the nonprofit's sphere of influence was often limited to

women in its own circles and, if the vision was to "engage women from all walks of life," a change had to be made. She began to take this same message of truth, strength, and hope into the local jail and minister to incarcerated women. This opened up a whole new door for Tenacious Grace.

The ministry of Tenacious Grace has grown through the years and now operates from an office at 1512 Evans Street. It has a team of seven women operating the day-to-day functions as well as an eight-member board of directors and numerous volunteers who offer their services from time to time. It is a two-part ministry that functions as a traditional women's ministry with speaking engagements and has an annual women's retreat each year. Now, however, there is a much heavier focus put on the jail ministry side. Cawthon and fellow team member, Cheri Jordan, are chaplains to the female inmates at the Florence County Detention Center. They visit the women several times a week and build relationships with them while they are incarcerated. They get to know these women on a personal level, discover their needs, build trust and offer hope. Upon release from jail, Tenacious Grace continues to work with these women to write a new story for their lives.

What Tenacious Grace has found is that many of these incarcerated women never had a fighting chance. Most of them have grown up in the thick of poverty, abuse and addiction. They never had someone to believe in them and show them how to live a life of freedom and hope. Upon their release from jail, many have no place to go other than right back to the situations that landed them in jail in the first place. They go back to abusive mates, family members who are addicts and unbelievable poverty. The odds are stacked against them, and try as they might, jobs are hard to find when you have a record.

Tenacious Grace works with these women to connect them to resources that can help. They help them establish resumes, acquire a GED and look for work and safe housing. One of the most valuable things they offer the women is encouragement and hope. A group of women meet monthly with Tenacious Grace in a support group setting. They challenge one another, hold one another accountable, and learn from one another's mistakes and victories. Sometimes ministry is as simple as texts encouraging another woman to have a fabulous day or reminding her that she has value. Other days, the needs are greater, and Tenacious Grace has stepped in to help in larger ways. Through the generous donations of Tenacious Grace supporters, the ministry has been able to purchase reliable transportation for two of the women, help other women with utility bills, pay rent, purchase clothing and more.



Cookie Cawthon - Executive Director

The biggest goal and vision of Tenacious Grace at this point is to open Five Sparrows. This will be a two-year residential recovery home for women who are survivors of addiction, abuse, poverty and prostitution. It will be free of charge to the women it serves. This has been a long-range goal for the ministry, and it is excited to be close to seeing it come to fruition, hopefully opening in 2020. This home will be life changing for women in our community and help them in their journey towards healing and

wholeness. Tenacious Grace is honored to bring a home of this nature to women of the Pee Dee area because the need is great. The nonprofit desires that not another woman is lost to the streets, swallowed up by addiction or feels hopeless in the clutches of an abuser. Their lives have value and worth, and these beautiful women have much to offer society. Tenacious Grace is here to walk alongside these women as they discover their potential in Christ and learn to embrace these truths for themselves.

To learn more about Tenacious Grace and the future Five Sparrows, visit our website at www.tenaciousgrace.cc or follow us on Facebook at Tenacious Grace.



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– Eleanor Roosevelt

LAKE CITY, SOUTH CAROLINA : SAVE THE DATES

Submitted by Visit Lake City SC

Heard the buzz about the first Bee City in South Carolina? Lake City boasts attractions like Moore Farms Botanical Garden, Jones-Carter Gallery, TRAX Visual Art Center, and a public art trail chock full of colorful murals & sculptures. Popular annual events & festivals include ArtFields, Rhythm & Q's and Hometown Holidays.

With stellar attractions & events that draw an ever-increasing number of visitors to this small southern town, the buzz about Lake City is getting louder! In 2018, Lake City was voted the "Best Small Town Cultural Scene" by readers of USA Today's 10 Best. Most recently, Travel + Leisure magazine named Lake City as a top destination for May. But why wait 'til spring when Fall 2019 in Lake City has unique events sure to delight even the most jaded traveler!

Rhythm & Q's BBQ & Live Music Competition Oct 18 & 19 - Festival Park at The ROB

Sanctioned by the SC Barbecue Association and offering the largest total cash prizes in South Carolina, Rhythm & Q's is sure to be the place to indulge in the best BBQ around. Add the excitement of a multi-genre Live Music Competition with a grand finale performance by Easton Corbin, and you've got the perfect recipe for a grand fall weekend in Lake City.

Writers in the Round Oct 24 - The Bean Market

Nashville comes to Lake City in this annual Bluebird Café-inspired event that features Nashville's hottest songwriters, including Pee Dee local Frank Rogers, performing the hits that they've written for other artists such as Eric Church, Darius Rucker and Blake Shelton. The

performing songwriters share the tales behind the tunes, and indulge in a bit of wise-crackin' and joke-tellin' that results in an evening of live music like no other.

Cocktails & Cuisine Nov. 16 - The Stables

Cocktails & Cuisine pairs the talents of the culinary team at Lake City's Crossroads on Main with award-winning special guest Chef & Sommeliers to create a deliciously memorable multi-course dining experience! Passionate foodies and oenophiles will appreciate commentary from the Chefs and Sommeliers. As the premier Lake City Culinary Series event, the spring edition of Cocktails & Cuisine was a sold-out smash hit. Make plans to treat yourself to the fall edition of the bi-annual event!

Hometown Holidays Dec. 6-8 - Downtown Lake City

Kick off the holiday season with a weekend of Christmas cheer in the heart of downtown Lake City. "Don't miss" holiday highlights include Greater Lake City Chamber of Commerce's "After Dark" Christmas Parade, City of Lake City's Tree Lighting, Junior Sorosis Club's Candlelight Tour of Historic Lake City, great sales and holiday craft activities at participating downtown shops, and FREE ice skating at The Bean Market! Make Lake City's Hometown Holidays part of YOUR family's holiday tradition!

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“GO NUTS AT THE 16TH ANNUAL SC PECAN FESTIVAL ON NOVEMBER 2” Submitted by the SC Pecan Festival



It's that time again, time to "GO NUTS" at the 16th 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 and Best Community Festival by the Morning News in 2014 and 2019.

This family-friendly event kicks off on Nov. 2 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 back international live muralist, ARCY. To Downtown Florence to create a large-scale masterpiece in real time during the festival.

We invite locals and visitors to spend the day with us at the 16th 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, country, jazz and our community dance stage to beach music, Motown and rock and roll. You don't want to miss our headline act, The Ohio Players, 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.scpccanfestival.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. This year, the Cook-off celebrates breast cancer survivors with our "Go Nuts with Pink" Pecan Challenge. Make your dish pink, and include pecans for your chance to win.

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, 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've brought back our 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, 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 drone demonstrations.

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.scpccanfestival.com and find us on Facebook for updates and features leading up to festival day.

(Photos from 2018 Pecan Festival)





SOUTH CAROLINA PECAN FESTIVAL

SATURDAY NOV. 2

DOWNTOWN FLORENCE, SC 10:00am to 7:00pm



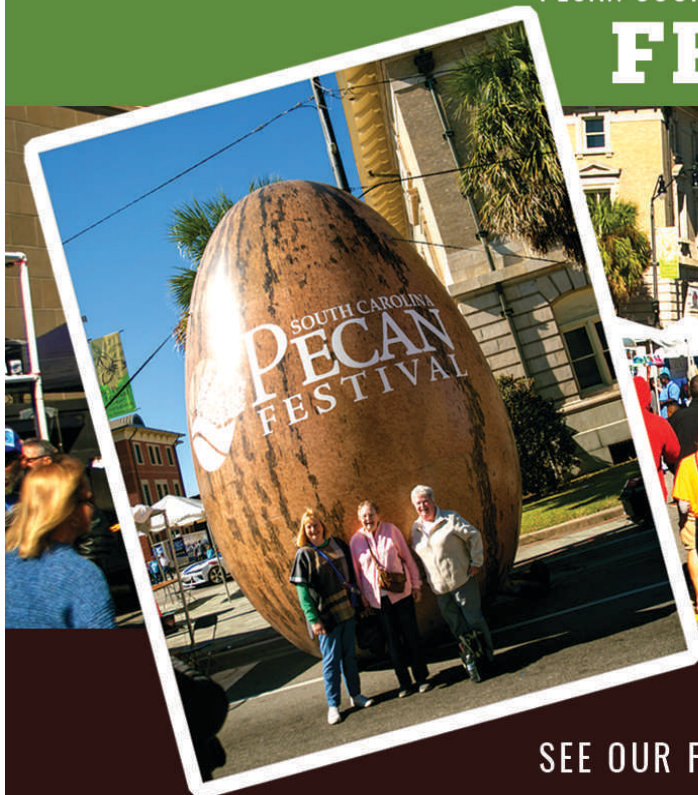
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**OHIO
PLAYERS**

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SHOW • BIKE LIKE A NUT • RUN LIKE A NUT •
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PECAN COOK-OFF • LIVE MURALIST, ARCY! • 250 + VENDORS • & MORE!

FREE ADMISSION

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FLORENCE
COUNTY
SOUTH CAROLINA

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HOMELESS MINISTRY LEAVES NO MAN BEHIND Submitted by Joyce Black, CEO Victory Marketing Group LLC



Pastor Modestine Brody welcomes everyone to the Annual Banquet

Resurrection Restoration Center for the Homeless (RRCFH) is hosting its second Annual Fundraiser, which is a Benefit Banquet, on Nov. 9 between 4-6p.m. at First Presbyterian Church 700 Park Avenue, Florence.

The center was founded by the late Pastor Lewis Brody, a homeless veteran. His slogan was always, “We care because we have been there.” Pastor

Modestine Brody, who serves as the executive director is grateful to everyone who has given the center a second chance. A few years ago, the doors were almost closed on the center. But God dispersed His “angels”: corporations, non-profits, churches and individuals to provide provision, growth and stability for Resurrection. Its existence and restoration is truly a testament to God. The center does not have a huge staff or budget but truly believes that “little becomes much-- when you put it in the master’s hands.”

RRCFH is one of the four homeless ministries in Florence and is known as the home of “Second Chances.” The center has housing for eight to 10 men with outreach ministries to serve those in need. Over 100 men are supported and restored through RRCFH each year. The center is a part of the City of Florence’s No One Unsheltered (NOU) program. RRCFH tackles the tough cases. Clients that don’t usually fit into the other shelters are sent to RRCFH. The center goals are to



Lou Clemmons, a graduate of RRCFH 2019

help men who have lost their way and give them a sense of hope.

At its banquet, the center will salute those who have graduated from its program and thank its volunteers and contributors. It will also showcase a special gospel choir. Banquet Tickets are \$30. They can be purchased online at www.rrcfh.org. RRCFH is also looking for volunteers and mentors.



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City of Marion Annual
Holiday Prelude & Community
Tree Lighting Celebration

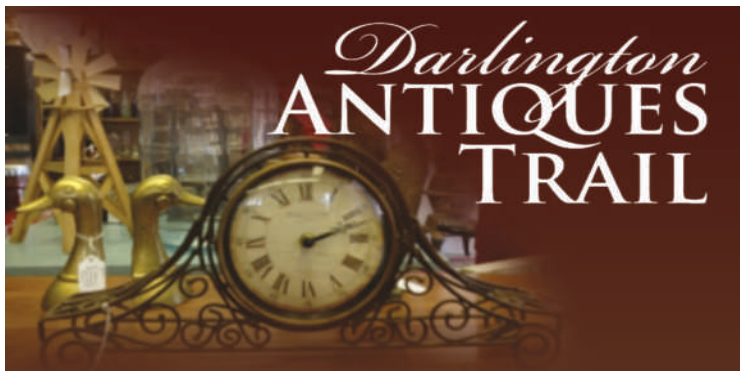
Saturday, November 30th
Holiday Craft Market 10am-1pm
Main Street Commons
Extended shopping hours—Main Street Merchants 10am-5pm

Thursday, December 5th
Downtown Marion Merchants Extended Shopping Hours
6-8pm Downtown Marion

Sunday, December 7th
Marion Christmas Parade
Annual City Tree Lighting Celebration 6pm
Marion County Courthouse
Fireworks at Withlacoochee Park 7pm

Saturday, December 14th
Pilot Club of Marion Bazaar 10am
Marion County Museum Luncheon 12-2pm
Historic Marion Christmas Tour of Homes 2-6pm
All events begin at Marion Opera House
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EASY PROJECTS TO GET THE WHOLE FAMILY OUTSIDE



Movie night outdoors

Want to get the kids away from screens and outside for some fresh air? Many outdoor projects will not only lure your whole family outdoors once the jobs are completed, but the family may actually want to also help you.

Here are some ideas for outdoor projects everyone will love.

1. Make a backyard movie theater

Who wouldn't love watching movies under the stars? You'll need a DVD projector and a large screen. You can use a large drop cloth or blackout cloth stretched over a PVC frame or between two trees for a screen, if you have them. Stretch it taut and secure so it doesn't move with every breeze mid-movie. Provide plenty of blankets or rugs and pillows so everyone can relax during the movie, and pop up some popcorn! You can rent a projector, collapsible screen and popcorn machine.

2. Build wooden benches

For kids, and grownups, who aren't keen on lying on the grass to relax, offer outdoor seating options in shady spots. Sturdy wooden benches are not hard to build, and there are plenty of templates online for different approaches. One creative method is to build a bench around the trunk of a favorite large tree. Get kids involved in helping with construction and painting. Supply cushions for a comfy, shady spot for kids to read, talk and daydream.

3. Get out the s'mores

Fire pits are all the rage, and for good reason. They're easy to make, and people love gathering around a fire to roast marshmallows and enjoy a summer evening. You'll need to check local ordinances regarding fires before you begin. Pick a spot well away from bushes or foliage, with no overhanging branches or structures. Fire pits can be dug into the ground, at ground level or raised slightly above ground level.

4. Create a playhouse or gazebo

To attract everyone in the family, create a little outdoor space for kids to play in or for adults to enjoy a beverage and relax. Depending on the size and design of your project, this can be a straightforward build or a more complicated structure. Online templates can give you ideas for different design options, so you can choose what works best for your space and skill level.

5. Put up a tree swing

If you've got an older, but sturdy, healthy tree with a good-sized horizontal branch, this could be a great spot for a tree swing. Make sure the branch is long enough to occasionally relocate the swing to prevent damage to the tree. You can make either a simple disk-shaped swing with a single rope or a traditional rectangular swing with 2-4 ropes.

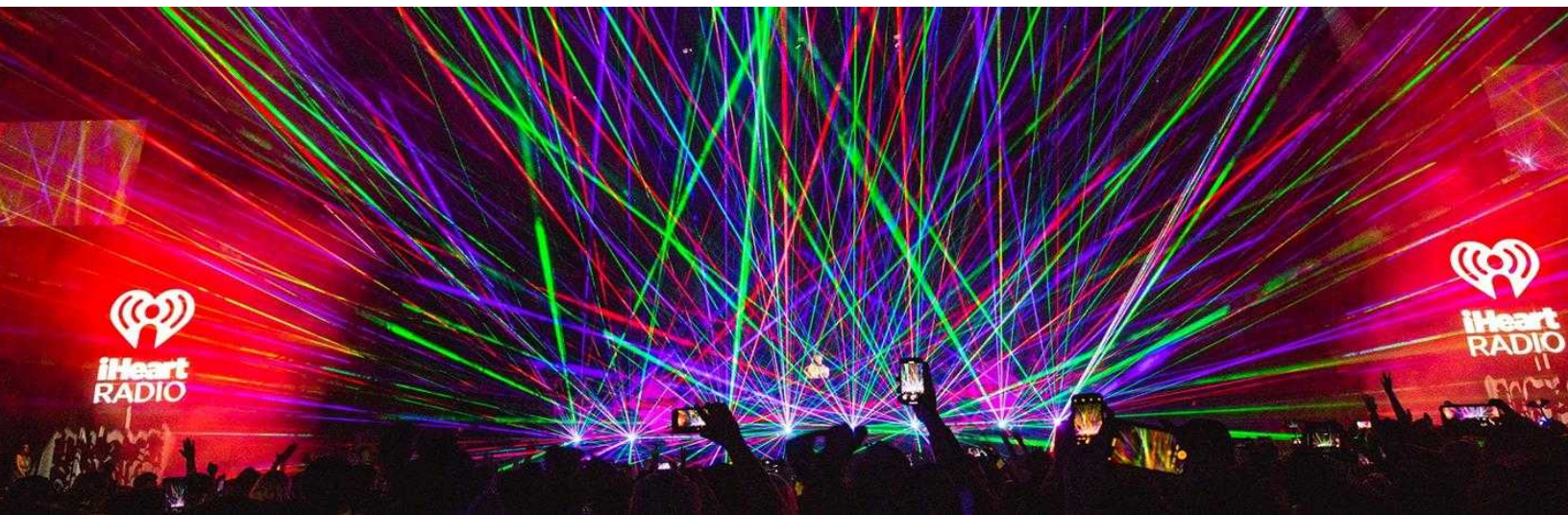
The entire family will find renewed interest in spending time together outdoors with your creative additions to the yard. Now is a great time to start a fun new project.



Grabbing popcorn before the entertainment starts

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QVC GIFT IS RIGHT ON TIME!

Submitted by Anne Carpenter, Director



QVC presentation

Executives at QVC in Florence kicked off Florence County Disabilities Foundation's annual giving campaign with a generous gift. Several ladies served by the Florence County Disabilities and Special Needs Board were on hand to accept the gift on behalf of the Florence County Disabilities Foundation.

Everyone came together at the Foundation's Pee Dee Thrift shop on East Palmetto St. to see what goes on behind the scenes. The ladies updated the QVC group on trips they have taken, places they work, the advocacy program and what is going on at the workshops. The ladies learned about QVC and what they do at the Florence distribution center. They discovered they had a lot in common as the retail business is near and dear to QVC and the Pee Dee Thrift shops.

Florence County Disabilities Foundation provides funding and resources for quality life experiences to persons living with life-long disabilities who are served by the Florence County Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

If you would like more information about this topic, please visit www.fcdfoundation.org, call 843-374-2641, or email flodisfoundsc@yahoo.com



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MACK HELPS OTHERS SEE GREATNESS WITHIN by Les Echols



Mary Mack

JOHNSONVILLE-Harvest Hope Pee Dee continues to grow, build and develop its reputation as one of the strongest service organizations in the community. When Mary Mack joined Harvest Hope in January of 2019, she felt it was a divine calling. In her role as volunteer coordinator, she works with corporations, schools and individuals to assist in supporting Harvest Hope Food Banks mission “to provide for the needs of hungry people by gathering and sharing quality food with dignity, compassion and education.” Mack assists in maximizing the efficiency of the organization by

recruiting, engaging and retaining quality volunteers.

A native of Johnsonville, Mack has spent most of her career assisting those in need. A part of her journey in community service was as a disaster relief volunteer with the American Red Cross. She started with intake documentation for people in need and saw the growing need for people in need to get help in a timely and efficient manner. “After the 1000-year flood in 2015, I began to notice the needs of those affected firsthand and began to become more involved,” said Mack. “Coming from a rural small town, I had a vested interest in helping make a difference in the lives of diverse and underserved populations.”

One of Mack’s favorite sayings is “let them be great.” When asked about the quote, she explained, “I am glad to be able to make a difference



Mary shares with children at a Harvest Hope event.

by empowering others and making a difference in their lives. As I venture into different communities, many of the poverty-stricken families make me remember and reinforce to myself that I should be grateful every day and help others to be great as well,” Mack concluded.

Mary Mack is a graduate of Coker College with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in sociology. She is a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. She is a faithful member of White Chapel Freewill Holiness Church of Johnsonville, where she is responsible for their food pantry.



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TIPS FOR STRESS-FREE OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING



Good food, great company and the beauty of the outdoors: dining with family or friends is the perfect way to enjoy beautiful weather. For many people, though, the job of outdoor entertaining can feel somewhat intimidating. But it doesn't have to be. With these simple tips, you'll end up hosting a memorable, stress-free get-together, whether it's a lovely patio lunch for two or a party for twenty.

Keep it cool

If the weather on the day of your event is expected to be particularly hot, make sure you plan ways to keep things cool. Set up tables and chairs within the natural outdoor shade or move seating under umbrellas and awnings. You could even set out small spray bottles for guests to cool themselves off, or supply attendees with paper fans you can find at the local dollar store. Keep plenty of ice-cold beverages within easy reach by stocking metal serving tubs with drinks. No tubs? Look around your house for unexpected inspiration. For example, a wheelbarrow or kids' wagon filled with ice and beverages works great.

Streamline food prep

Being a gracious host shouldn't mean being stuck in the kitchen. By choosing easy dishes, you'll make guests happy while freeing yourself up to join in on all the fun. A great place to look for crowd-pleasing appetizers that require little to no prep work is the frozen food aisle. There, you'll find a variety of high-quality, ready-made options that will help you save time without sacrificing taste.

Vary serving ware

Worried about mismatched serving ware? Fret not. This is hardly a problem when it comes to easy, breezy outdoor entertaining. Using an eclectic mix of different pieces, like wooden cutting boards, floral platters and striped serving trays, is both charming and on-trend. Even the plates that guests use can be a fun hodgepodge of patterns. Keep in mind that if you're serving food buffet style, you'll want to have



some mesh food covers on hand to protect your dishes.

Add outdoor activities

By adding some casual outdoor activities to your event, you'll create a relaxed, playful mood that will inspire guests to mingle.

Puzzles and board games are

an ideal complement to all the easy-going conversation, and yard games, like croquet, beanbag toss and horseshoes, are popular standbys for partygoers, both young and old. If kids will be in attendance, keep them occupied with their own activities and supplies, such as bubble blowers and washable sidewalk chalk.

Simplify your menu

Meals are all about keeping it simple, so a handful of light and flavorful courses are all you need to keep your guests satisfied. A colorful salad, fresh grilled vegetables and a few easy main dishes like sandwiches and kebobs make up a perfect seasonal menu. Of course, don't forget the dessert! Wow your guests with a fruit-topped cheesecake or pound cake.



"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

The Swamp Fox Highland Games and Celtic Festival is a family friendly event that will be held on November 16th 2019 from 9a-5p at The Columns Plantation. Vendors, athletes, and spectators from all over South Carolina will be coming together for a full immersion into the Celtic culture. 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. We have opportunities through advertisements and sponsorships for companies and individuals who are looking for exposure to a wide variety of families in the Pee Dee area.



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