

# HEALTHY INSIGHTS

from HEALTHY LEARNERS



## Making a Difference

### THE STORIES OF THREE HEALTHIER, HAPPIER STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

#### Raising Three Children Becomes Easier for a Single Mother



The oldest of three, Nigel was in high school nine years ago at Carvers Bay High School in Hemingway, South Carolina, when his

family learned about Healthy Learners. His mom was a single mother of three, working long hours to make ends meet and be able to provide for her family. Because it was difficult for her to take time off from work, it was difficult for her three children to make it to their health care appointments. The school nurse referred the family to Healthy Learners. Nigel's mom was thrilled to be able to lean on the program's support to ensure her three sons could receive the medical care they needed.

Healthy Learners helped coordinate health care appointments and transport Nigel and his younger brothers QuRon and Kiersten to their appointments, which helped keep the three brothers healthy and able to focus on their schoolwork.

Now 24, Nigel works at the Georgetown County School District Business Services Department as an accounts payable clerk.

He received a bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting from Francis Marion University. Healthy Learners continues to ensure his youngest brother QuRon can get the health care he needs.

*"Healthy Learners helped us be more responsible by keeping us on track with our appointments and checkups, and also caring more about our own health," said Nigel. "The Healthy Learners program has been so important to our family because it has been a great deal of help and simply made our life easier."*

#### Healthy Teeth Pay Multiple Dividends



Six-year-old Benjamin\* had severe tooth decay after a long period of inattention to his dental needs. Benjamin frequently complained of tooth pain, which made it difficult for him to concentrate in school. The school had made several attempts to have the student's father sign Healthy Learners referral forms. His father later reported that he was embarrassed by his

poor living conditions, which led him to have minimal contact with his son's school.

The school was able to secure a signature and Healthy Learners Greenwood accompanied Benjamin on a visit to Pediatric Dentist Dr. Jennifer Turner. The dentist recommended oral surgery. "We were concerned that getting Benjamin's father to comply with the required appointments prior to surgery and then to the surgery itself would be a challenge. That was not the case. His father welcomed conversation about his son and appreciated the assistance we were providing," said Alice Balentine, student services coordinator Healthy Learners Greenwood.

The three perioperative appointments required for surgery were completed and the surgery was successful. Benjamin is now thriving.

"It was very evident that Benjamin's father truly cared for his son but was embarrassed by his living conditions. The experience has resulted in a better relationship between the school and his father and a healthier Benjamin. Compassion goes a long way," said Balentine.

# ORGANIZATION UPDATE

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## INTERIM PROJECT DIRECTOR COLLETTE HOPKINS, PHD, OVERSEEING FIVE PROGRAM SITES



While Healthy Learners conducts a search for a new executive director, Collette Hopkins, PhD, has been serving as project director. In this interim role, Dr. Hopkins is managing the day-to-day operations of Healthy Learners, overseeing the five program sites. She is onsite in the Columbia office two to three days each week. Dr. Hopkins comes to Healthy Learners from having worked with multiple nonprofit organizations around the world throughout her career. Her area of expertise is child survival with an emphasis on children with disabilities. She has previously worked as an education advocate for Families First in Atlanta (children in foster care), served as the director of The Education Advocacy Project (children in foster care), was the director of partnerships of research and sponsored programs at Clark Atlanta University, and is the founding director of education for the National Black Arts Festival. Dr. Hopkins is a Thomas J. Watson Fellow, a Bureau of Education for the Handicapped Fellow, and a Southern Fellowship Fund Fellow. She earned a PhD from the George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University.

## JOANNE BAMBERG-JACKSON PROMOTED TO NEW DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



Joanne Bamberg-Jackson was recently named director of operations for Healthy Learners. In this role, she leads human resources for the corporate office and other offices throughout the state. She also oversees all procurement needs and manages budgets and cost projections for each site, as well as being responsible for training staff on new software and equipment. She previously was project manager for Healthy Learners.

“Joanne Bamberg-Jackson has committed over a decade of her work life to Healthy Learners. I see her as a leader of people, and I am excited for this new opportunity for her to grow professionally,” said Tom Keith, president of the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina. ♦

## Painful Skin Condition Brought Under Control

Rebecca\* is a kindergartner who is petite for her age and has a beautiful smile—when she can be coaxed to smile. Healthy Learners Allendale is helping Rebecca get the treatment she needs for eczema, which can lead to breakouts along her forehead and around her neckline. She also has patches of eczema on her arms and knees, with the areas becoming red, inflamed, cracked and rough at times, while almost always being itchy. She even sometimes gets blisters on top of the red and cracked areas, making her smiles a little less frequent than the other children in her class.

Healthy Learners has helped her get the condition in much better control with regular visits to the doctor and medication. Although she is very young, she has a good understanding of her condition and how to care for it. Healthy Learners also helped her receive a vision exam and glasses this year. Her teacher reported that she had a very proud smile the day she came to class wearing her new glasses. ♦

*\* Name has been changed*

## Program Updates Five programs serve 150 schools across South Carolina.



◀ **ALLENDALE** – Healthy Learners Allendale staff participated in a community-wide health fair in May sponsored by Allendale County Hospital. The event offers low cost lab screenings, and free blood pressure and blood glucose checks. Program Manager Shelley Thomas was also asked to speak at the local meeting of the federal Promise Zone program, sharing important information about Healthy Learners with 45 attendees.

**DILLON** – Healthy Learners Dillon moved into new, roomier office space in February in a more visible and central location in Dillon, located at 108 North 5th Avenue. The program had been in a temporary location after its original office building had weather-related damage. The program also acquired a second van, which means more students can be transported and served faster than before.

**GEORGETOWN** – The community again came out in full support of Healthy Learners Georgetown while enjoying another successful Nashville Songwriters in the Round fundraising event in April. In its 10th year serving the children of Georgetown County, the program experienced an increase in the number of students served and services provided compared to the previous year. ▶



# Thank You Nurses and Providers



Low Country Health Care  
System Pharmacy, Allendale

## RECOGNIZING OUR MOST ACTIVE PARTNERS

Collaboration is a core value of Healthy Learners and collaboration with our partners is key to providing children with access to quality health care, which could not happen without school nurses, health care providers and supporters.

Each and every partner is critical to meeting unmet health care needs. Once again, we recognize the school nurses who referred the most students and/or highest percentage of the total student enrollment at their schools, as well as the providers who provided the most services in the first half of the school year (8/20/2018 – 12/15/18). They are:

### ALLENDALE

**Nurse Jannie Preacher** *Allendale-Fairfax Middle*  
**Low Country Health Care System Pharmacy\*\***

### DILLON

**Nurse Kelly Smith\*\*** *Latta Elementary*  
**Dillon Smiles**

### GEORGETOWN

**Nurse Kim Ward\*\*** *Plantersville Elementary*  
**Nurse Lou Ann Miller** *Sampit Elementary*  
**Access Family Services\*\***

### GREENWOOD

**Nurse Emily Polatty\*** *Matthews Elementary*  
**Pediatric Dentistry of Greenwood**

### MIDLANDS

**Nurse Melanie Alphin** *South Kilbourne Elementary*  
**WellPartners Dental & Eye Health\*\***

Visit [healthylearners.com/collaborative-partnerships](http://healthylearners.com/collaborative-partnerships) to see a list of all current health care, business and community partners.



Staff of Dillon Smiles



Staff from Pediatric Dentistry, Greenwood

\*\* *third consecutive recognition* \* *repeat recognition*



Nurse Preacher, Allendale



Nurse Smith, Dillon



Nurse Polatty, Greenwood



Nurse Alphin, Midlands



Nurse Ward, Georgetown



Nurse Miller, Georgetown



< **GREENWOOD** – The Greenwood program continues to grow in the number of students referred and with the addition of a new staff member. Kristen Metts joined the program in April and is working part-time helping with program operations.

**MIDLANDS** – Healthy Learners Midlands has participated in a number of community programs recently, including the Healthy Kids Fair for Junior League, Rice Creek Spring Fling and Alcorn Community Health and Wellness Fair.

# NEWS BRIEFS AND NOTES



## HEALTHY LEARNERS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Matthew B. Roberts (Chair)  
Debbie Locklair (Vice Chair)  
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Philip Wes Jackson, II  
Matthew Shaffer  
Frank Wideman, III

**MISSION ::** In the spirit of the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine, Healthy Learners is devoted to removing children's health barriers to learning with love and compassion.

**SERVICES ::** Healthy Learners services include assistance with the Medicaid application process, assistance with referrals for clinical counseling, coordination of health care, dental care, hearing evaluations and care, medications, transportation to appointments, treatment for medical needs, and vision care.

**Champions for Children Golf Tournament Turns 20! ::** The annual Healthy Learners Champions for Children Golf Tournament in Memory of George Younginer is celebrating a milestone on October 23 as this important fundraising event turns 20. With two decades under its belt, the tournament continues to be a huge hit with a day of golf, food, entertainment, contests and prizes at the Fort Jackson Golf Club in Columbia, South Carolina. The much-needed funds raised from the tournament help support the mission of Healthy Learners.



Matt Younginer



Dawndy Mercer Plank

This year's Premier Exclusive sponsor is Aflac and tournament co-chairs are Dawndy Mercer Plank, WIS-TV anchor, and Matt Younginer, national account manager, Husqvarna, and Healthy Learners Fund Development Committee member. Visit [healthylearners.com/events](http://healthylearners.com/events) for more information and details about sponsorship opportunities or contact tournament Co-Director Marge Rath at 803-454-0350 ext. 4 or email [MRath@healthylearners.com](mailto:MRath@healthylearners.com).

**Adult Spelling Bee Set for September ::** The fifth annual Greenwood Friends of Healthy Learners Adult Spelling Bee will M-A-T-E-R-I-A-L-I-Z-E September 24 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Emerald High School gym in Greenwood. More than 200 spellers are expected to strut their spelling prowess. Last year's event raised more than \$40,000 for Healthy Learners Greenwood. Visit [healthylearners.com/events](http://healthylearners.com/events) for more information.



**Welcome New Board Member Frank Wideman ::** The Healthy Learners Board of Trustees recently welcomed Frank Wideman to serve on the board for a three-year term, ending at the end of 2021. Wideman, a native of Washington, D.C., graduated from the University of South Carolina with a degree in political science. He served 24 years as a career officer in the U.S. Army, retiring in 1993 as a lieutenant colonel. Since then, he has been president of the Self Family Foundation. Wideman has been active in organized philanthropy as a founding member and first chair of the South Carolina Grantmakers Network; a trustee and chair of the Southeastern Council of Foundations; and, a trustee of the National Center for Family Philanthropy. Frank is also active in the economic development of the Greenwood area, serving as chair of the Greenwood Partnership Alliance and past chair of the Greater Greenwood Chamber of Commerce.

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HEALTHY LEARNERS

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