

HEALTHY INSIGHTS

from HEALTHY LEARNERS



Join Us in Celebrating 25 Years of Saying Yes

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



When Richland School District One School Nurse Diane O'Conner examined a student in the early 90s who needed glasses—which her parents could not afford—her response was one of action. And she said, yes. Thinking outside the box, she made a

special request of a dear friend. Attorney Al Pollard's response was also one of action. He said yes to paying for the student's glasses, and he said yes to the needs of other students who followed.

Twenty-five years later, in the spirit of "yes," Healthy Learners continues to meet the unmet health care needs of children. According to the July 1, 2017, program and services report, for the 2016-2017 school year, Healthy Learners said "yes" to removing the health barriers to learning for 1,592 students with 5,142 medical services.

Reflecting on the major accomplishments of Healthy Learners over the past 25 years speaks directly to the legacy and vision of our founders. Our greatest accomplishment is the positive impact made in the lives of the students we have served, students like Ben Bullock, Tyrell Singletary and Demetrius Edmonds. These students are the living testimonies for all of those who have and will continue to contribute to the mission and vision of Healthy Learners. These students and those who we will serve in the future are the legacies of our community leaders, board members, providers, funders, donors, friends,

partners and staff. The lives they are living reflect the desires of those who have committed to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

As I think about the future of Healthy Learners, there are many unknowns about health care—will it be accessible, affordable, who will and who will not be covered? But, what I do know is that Healthy Learners is committed to providing access to health care for children. We understand and value the fact that poor health is an obstacle to performing well in school, and we are up for the challenge of continuing to serve the children who will be our future leaders.

As we celebrate this significant milestone of 25 years of service to children, in the spirit of "yes" just as those who came before, we are preparing to be available to those who need us for the next 25 years.

Thank you to everyone who has supported Healthy Learners over these many years. We look forward to continuing this journey with you.

May God Bless You All,

JO PAULING-JONES
*Executive Director,
Healthy Learners*



Making a Difference for 25 years

One of the First Healthy Learners Students Reflects on the Organization's Impact

In 1992, Demetrius Edmonds was a 10-year-old student at Sarah Nance Elementary School in Columbia. Healthy Learners was a newborn when the two were introduced. Twenty-five years later, both are doing well. Demetrius excelled in school and now has a successful career in information technology as a PC network coordinator for Providence Health. For the 25th anniversary, we were thrilled to reconnect with Demetrius and asked him to look back to 1992 when he was first introduced to the mission of Healthy Learners. Below are his thoughts on this milestone.

BY DEMETRIUS EDMONDS

I want to start off by congratulating Healthy Learners on the 25th anniversary and thank them for all their work and effort that goes into meeting the needs of children with unmet health needs. Back when I was 10, the school nurse thought I needed to see a dentist based on her evaluation of my teeth. Through Healthy Learners, this opportunity was made available to me and other children who may not have had the chance to get attention in health care areas where all children need it most.

For some, it was being in need of glasses, medical assistance or dental care. I can still remember the visit and being excited about the experience, taking in everything that they taught us about taking care of our teeth and building proper habits. Thinking about when I was 10, I remember how good it felt to be exposed to such things because as a child you want to know what, how and why everything works. To think of the impact this opportunity had on me and in my life is huge. I think about what if I had not gotten to go



on the trip to a dentist or what if it was never offered? Anything could have been the outcome, but thanks to Healthy Learners, they actually made a difference that many only talk about making. It's so much easier for children when they don't have to focus on their own basic necessities of care. It leaves them healthy and clear minded so that they can put their attention and energy on learning.

I later attended Benedict college as a biology major, but then moved toward the technology field. I have held many management positions in the IT field prior to my current job at Providence Health. Dealing with the public and people in general, a nice smile is great to have. See, it could have been a different story if that connection with Healthy Learners had never happened. What we do and when we do it isn't just for the current moment, but a lasting impression that we place in the lives of each other. In scripture, it says to care for one another, love one another. From God's impact to Healthy Learners to those who are impacted by the children that are helped with this program, I encourage the organization on their 25th Anniversary to follow in the steps of Christ and not cease in the good they do, for one life impacts another. ♦

Seeing Results with New Glasses

Vision is a core service Healthy Learners has provided since the beginning, helping thousands of children to see better and do better in school. Thomas* is one student who recently benefitted from vision services. He was referred to Healthy Learners for a vision exam. He had behavioral problems for more than a year and had difficulty concentrating. Healthy Learners took him for the exam, where the provider determined he had very poor vision. With glasses, his vision was corrected to 20/20. Thomas' teacher reported that he was like a different student. He became interested in reading and very attentive to things around him, no longer distracting the class. The teacher asked Thomas why he hadn't told anyone about not being able to see. He said he did not realize he couldn't see. ♦

Health Care, Coordination of Care and Transportation Change Lives of 3 Children

Five years ago, the Johnson* family's three young children needed help for several unmet health care issues (Christian age 6, Christina 7 and Christopher 8). The children's mother lacked transportation and access to care. The children all struggled with vision issues, which impaired their ability to read or see the classroom board. They were referred to Healthy Learners, when it was also discovered they had never been to a dentist. The school nurse reported that Christian had asthma but no inhaler at school. Through Healthy Learners, the children received transportation and dental and vision care, and Christian was assisted with episodic visits for asthma, plus medication for school and home. Christopher received medication to address an ADHD diagnosis. As a result, the children prospered in school, being able to see the board and to read without straining. Christopher and Christian's headaches resolved with glasses as well.

However, the biggest impact came for Christina. She had suffered with severe headaches that caused nausea and increasing absences in school, which glasses did not resolve. After attempts to reach a cause, her doctor agreed to prescribe migraine medicine, which worked. At the last follow up appointment, her mom said Christina ran to her and said, "I can enjoy life now...I don't have any more headaches!"

The children are now 13, 11 and 10, and are all doing well in school. Because of Healthy Learners, they've had consistent dental and vision care, and episodic and medication services

as needed. Their mother has talked about how coordination of care and transportation have been so helpful in accessing care and ensuring consistency of care for her children. ♦

ADHD Under Control, Student Stays on Track

Cary* is a 4th grader who has been served by Healthy Learners since he was in 1st grade. He had been diagnosed with ADHD and has been treated by a local pediatrician. Healthy Learners has helped him keep appointments by transporting him and ensuring he has his medication. He had been doing well in school until recently, when the school nurse reported that Cary had been suspended and was acting out in class. He told the nurse that his ADHD medication was not helping anymore. Healthy Learners quickly got him in to see his provider, who adjusted his medication. At the next appointment, Healthy Learners was able to give the provider good reports about Cary's behavior from school and home. Although he has some work to do to bring up one of his grades, he reported that he can think much clearer and better control his emotions. Healthy Learners has been a lifesaver for Cary's single mom, who works and helps care for her ill mother. ♦

It's so much easier for children when they don't have to focus on their own basic necessities of care. It leaves them healthy and clear minded so that they can put their attention and energy on learning.

—Demetrius Edmonds



Healthy Learners Celebrates 25 Years of Helping South Carolina’s Most Vulnerable Children Thrive

What happens when a child in South Carolina cannot see the front of the classroom? Or cannot focus because of a bad toothache? Or get to the doctor because their parents cannot take time off of work?

For too long and for too many children in need and without resources in Richland County, these types of challenges created major barriers to learning. Children were falling through the cracks of the health care system and were going without needed medical services.

Back in 1992, a group of concerned community leaders and public school system representatives teamed up to address these needs in Richland County. With the support of Providence Hospitals and funding from The Duke Endowment, Health Reach was created (renamed Healthy Learners in 2000).

Healthy Learners began primarily as a vision services program in five Columbia elementary schools—Sarah Nance, Watkins, Carver, Lyon Street (now Carver-Lyon) and Burton (now Burton-Pack).

The program later expanded to offer other health care services like assistance with referrals for clinical counseling,

dental care, coordination of health care, transportation to appointments, vision care and more.

Twenty-five years later, Healthy Learners is now a faith-based non-profit partnering with 11 school districts statewide and serving 149 schools in five program areas—Allendale, Dillon, Georgetown, Greenwood and the Midlands. Financial support to make the expansion possible has come from many sources, including the Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina, The Duke Endowment, BlueCross BlueShield Foundation of South Carolina, Frances P. Bunnelle Foundation, Self Regional Healthcare, Self Family Foundation, corporations, individuals and others.

While funders are critical to success, so are the organization’s health care provider partners, business and community partners, school nurses, community supporters and volunteers. Recognizing the role community supporters play in increasing awareness and raising money, Healthy Learners created the Champion for Children award in 2011 (see sidebar for a list of award recipients).

In 25 years, Healthy Learners has provided nearly 59,000 vision, dental, medication and other health-related services to 12,644 individual students across South Carolina on its mission for healthy children, better students and thriving communities. ♦

1992
Providence Hospitals and a partner at Nexsen Pruet, LLC found Health Reach to serve five Richland County schools.

1995
Program transitions from Providence Hospitals to a ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System

1997
Three-year grant from Sisters of Charity Foundation of South Carolina provides financial stability and helps sustain established programs

2000

Name changes to Healthy Learners



2002

Three-year grant from The Duke Endowment enables expansion to 17 more schools (57 total schools served)

2005

Becomes statewide initiative with expansion to Allendale, Dillon & Greenwood (with seed funding from The Duke Endowment, BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina, and additional financial support from Self Regional Healthcare, Self Family Foundation and The Fullerton Foundation Regional Advisory Boards)

2006

Receives the Achievement Citation, the most prestigious award from the Catholic Health Association of the United States, plus the NOVA award from the American Hospital Association and the Irma P. Ramos Excellence in Hispanic Community Services Award



2007

Receives Early Childhood and Basic Health Care Initiative Award from Healthy South Carolina Challenge and Governor Mark Sanford

2009 Healthy Learners Georgetown opens

2011 Names first Champion for Children award recipient (Ray Tanner, USC's men's baseball coach)

2016

Expands its Greenwood program to serve Ware Shoals (149 schools served statewide)

2017

25TH ANNIVERSARY 58,741 vision, dental and other health-related services provided to 12,644 students

Recognizing CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN

The Champion for Children Award recognizes the important role community supporters play in increasing awareness and raising money for the organization's mission. Below are the recipients since the award was created in 2011:

- 2017 VAN HAUSER, LCK**
- 2016 DAWN STALEY, University of South Carolina** head women's basketball coach
- 2015 JIM and ANNE HART, Healthy Learners Ambassadors**
- 2014 MICHAEL A. YOUNGINER, Younginer Engineered Products, LLC**
- 2013 JUDI GATSON, WIS-TV anchor**
- 2011 RAY TANNER, University of South Carolina** head baseball coach (now athletic director)

THANK YOU Generous Supporters

Thousands of caring supporters have given generously over the years, making a world of difference to the children we have served since 1992 and continue to serve each day. Gifts have come in a variety of ways: contributions to the annual fund, event sponsorships, grants and donations made in memory or tribute of a loved one. We are deeply grateful for each and every gift and the valuable partnership our donors have with us.



Visit healthylearners.com/our-donors to view a current listing of donors, and to make

a donation today to our "Challenge \$25,000 for 25 years." Help us fulfill our mission of removing children's health barriers to learning with love and compassion for the next 25 years!

Please call Marge Rath at 803.454.0350 ext. 4 for more information or to donate by phone.



Healthy Learners Program Updates

Five programs serve 149 schools across South Carolina. Following are brief updates from these programs.

ALLENDALE Healthy Learners Allendale is looking forward to a new school year after completing another successful year providing transportation and arranging services for children in Allendale County Schools. During the school year, Program Manager Shelley Thomas and Student Services Coordinator Gwen Walker participated in several after school events, like the Allendale Elementary Parent Game Night and the Allendale-Fairfax High School Special Services Spring Parent Night. Healthy Learners provided information at the events about its program and information about asthma and healthy snacks. At the beginning of the school year, Healthy Learners assisted Fairfax Elementary with vision screenings, which resulted in Healthy Learners serving several students for vision care. During the year, medications were the highest referral need with episodic visits second highest.

DILLON During the last school year, Healthy Learners Dillon remained active in the community by participating in the Dillon Collaborative Council, Pee Dee Community Action Partnership and Dillon District Four Coordinated School Health Advisory Council, as well as working with health-services provider McLeod Dillon to complete a community health needs assessment. The program was grateful to receive a monetary donation from the Dillon District Four School Board.

GEORGETOWN Nashville came to Georgetown again in April for the annual Nashville Songwriters in the Round fundraising event. The event features Nashville songwriters who share their songs and the stories behind them in an intimate setting. Thank you to all the generous sponsors, musicians, volunteers and friends who made Songwriters in the Round possible, netting nearly \$67,000 with 33 sponsorships and more than 200 tickets sold. All proceeds from the event are donated to the Healthy Learners Georgetown program.

GREENWOOD The program completed its 11th year serving children without resources and in need of basic health care assistance. Dental health continues to be a great concern, so the program focuses on addressing dental needs and educating students on the importance of good dental health and hygiene. In collaboration with Greenwood District 50 school nurses, vision needs were identified as an ongoing need for most students who are prescribed glasses, because they don't always receive annual exams and new eyeglasses when prescriptions change. The goal for the new school year is to work to ensure all eligible children have access to eyeglasses for school success. In other news, the Friends of Healthy Learners will host the 3rd annual Adult Spelling Bee September 26 from 6:30-8:30 to support Healthy Learners Greenwood. Community and school teams compete in this family-friendly event.



Jennifer Cooke

MIDLANDS Healthy Learners welcomed Jennifer Cooke as the new program manager for the Midlands program in early 2017. Cooke is a registered nurse and also has a background in law and social work. She and student services coordinators, Kim Morgan and Kara Marsh, started off the 2017-2018 school year in early August by partnering with the Junior League of Columbia and The Ray Tanner Foundation at its 3rd annual "Slam Dunk Back to School Bash." The event benefits two Columbia elementary schools, offering a backpack full of school and dental supplies for each student, dental and vision screenings, healthy snacks, and fun activities promoting physical fitness. Healthy Learners Midlands will work with school nurses to provide follow-up services for children with needs identified during the screenings.



Phillip Lammonds



Cole Taylor

Nashville Songwriters in the Round



Songwriters in the Round's intimate setting.



Matt Alderman



Kylie Sackley

NEWS BRIEFS AND NOTES

18th Annual Golf Tournament Hits the Links October 25

The 18th annual Healthy Learners Champions for Children Golf Tournament in Memory of George Younginer tees off October 25, 2017, at the Fort Jackson Golf Club in Columbia. Join us for a great day of golf, food, entertainment, contests and prizes. Thank you to Colonial Life for being the event's premier exclusive sponsor for the fifth consecutive year. And, thank you to the many sponsors and volunteers who join Healthy Learners in meeting the unmet health needs of children by supporting the golf tournament. Each year, proceeds from the tournament enable hundreds of children to receive health care services like vision care, dental care and hearing evaluations. This year's golf tournament Co-Chairs, Matt Younginer (Husqvarna, ESPN2 Radio) and Coach Monte Lee (Clemson University head baseball coach), thank you for making a difference in the lives of the children served.



Staff Changes

This year, Healthy Learners said goodbye to Director of Development Todd Buehrig and Georgetown Program Manager Rebecca Lammonds, who is moving to Nashville. Both will be missed. While we said goodbye to them, we welcomed several new faces, including:

- Jennifer Cooke, Midlands Program Manager (see Program Updates for more details)
- Aundrea' Simons, Fund Development Associate
- Marge Rath, Director of Development
- Aixa Rodriguez-Mariani, M.D., Georgetown Program Manager

By the Numbers **Report Card 2016-2017**



5,154

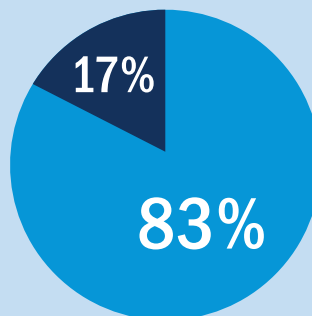
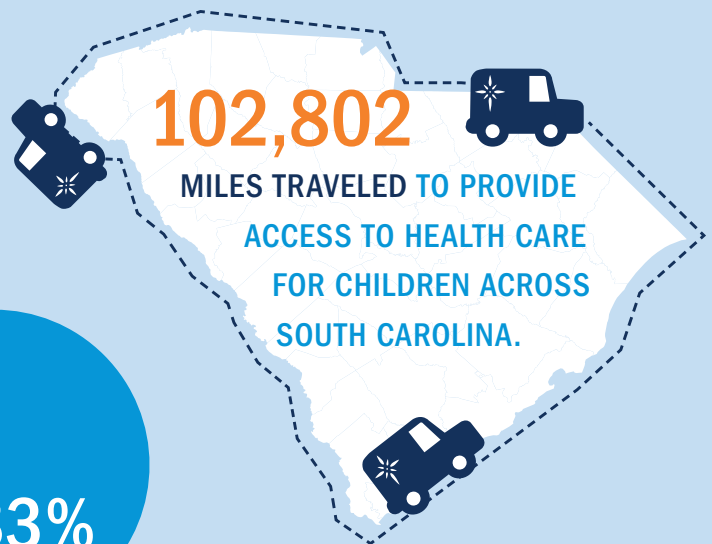
The number of vision, dental, medication and other health-related services provided to



1,593 children

9,655 service hours provided by the five regional programs

ROI—Healthy Learners returns **\$2.95** for every **\$1** invested per child



Low Administrative Costs
83% Program
17% Administrative

149 schools served statewide at **11** school districts in **5** program areas

HEALTHY LEARNERS

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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.



HEALTHY LEARNERS

A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System

COLLABORATION IS KEY

Thank You Partners

The idea for Healthy Learners began in 1992 through a partnership between a school nurse and a generous donor.

Collaborative partnerships with individuals, organizations and groups have always been a core value of Healthy Learners and have been essential in providing access to quality health care for children who are in need and without resources. Today, our collaborative partnerships fall under one of three categories:

1) HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS offer health care services to Healthy Learners students. 2) BUSINESS PARTNERS are businesses who support the mission of Healthy Learners. 3) COMMUNITY PARTNERS include non-profits and/or faith-based organizations, state or federal agencies.

Visit healthylearners.com/collaborative-partnerships to see a list of all current partners.

Find Us Online Visit healthylearners.com to get the latest news and updates, see videos about us, learn more about our services and make secure online donations. You can also connect to our Facebook page to discover more about our unique ministry.

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