

HEALTHY INSIGHTS from HEALTHY LEARNERS



Making a Difference

HEALTHY LEARNERS STUDENTS SHARE THEIR SUCCESS STORIES



Relief for a Hard-Working Mother—and Her Son

Winslow Hill's mom was a hard-working single parent of two, working first

shift to make ends meet for her family. She had medical insurance through her employer, but not dental coverage.

When her son Winslow, an 11th-grade student at Greenwood High School at the time, needed dental work, Healthy Learners was there to help. Winslow was living with tooth pain from a few teeth that had cavities and needed to be filled. The pain would get worse after lunch, which led to headaches and difficulty paying attention in class—taking a toll on his grades.

Winslow's school nurse referred him to Healthy Learners to get the dental care he needed at no cost and transportation to appointments over the course of a year since his mom could not take time off from work. The dentist filled Winslow's cavities and gave him health prevention information for avoiding future cavities.

"Without the help from Healthy Learners and the amazing people I met, I believe

problems with my teeth would have continued going uncorrected," said Winslow.

"It meant a lot to have someone with me every step of the way. I felt loved and cared for. They created a warm environment and I felt like family." – Winslow

After graduating from high school, Winslow studied at Piedmont Technical College in Greenwood. Now 26, Winslow works as a warehouse fork lift operator at SPF North America in Hodges, South Carolina.

Winslow's mother said she greatly appreciates the services and commitment her son received. "Healthy Learners went above and beyond. It makes a mother feel relieved that her child was being taken care of even when he wasn't with me. They always made sure my son got home or back to school safely. Thank you," she said.

Glasses Help Third Grader See Path to College

As a third grader at South Kilbourne Elementary School in Columbia, Atiya had difficulty seeing the board in the

classroom, which made it difficult for her to focus on learning. Without health or vision insurance and with a single mother struggling to support four children, the school nurse connected Atiya and her mother to Healthy Learners.

Healthy Learners scheduled an eye exam for Atiya and transported her to the appointment. After getting her first pair of glasses, Atiya could clearly see what her teacher was writing on the board. She began to excel in school, taking honors classes from third grade until she graduated from high school.



Atiya is now a freshman at Benedict College majoring in early childhood education.

She expects to graduate in 2021 and attributes part of her success to Healthy Learners.

"Healthy Learners is a great organization and I will forever be grateful that they helped me get glasses when I needed them. They helped me get to where I am today." – Atiya

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Overcoming a Learning Barrier

It's not surprising that children who cannot see cannot learn. That's why Healthy Learners has helped thousands of children get eyeglasses since 2000. One of those children who has been helped is Blanca Mojica. Blanca was in high school in Greenwood, South Carolina, when she began having trouble seeing the boards in school, making it difficult to take notes and keep up in her classes.

Around the same time, her family situation changed. Her mother became a single mother of three and her family did not have health or vision insurance. Apart from the difficulty of paying for an eye exam and glasses, it would have been a struggle for her mother to take Blanca to appointments.

Healthy Learners ensured Blanca received the eye care she needed at no cost to her mother, as well as dental care and transportation to appointments.

Being able to see the front of the classroom made a big difference in her ability to learn. No longer struggling to see, Blanca graduated from high school



in 2016. She began working at a factory in the production area and was quickly promoted off the factory floor and into the role of an administrative assistant in the facility's office.

She attributes her education and ability to learn while in school to her success at her current job.

A Burden Lifted Leads to More Focused Learning

Alatyana Sanchez's family was struggling to make ends meet. She was attending Allendale-Fairfax High School in Fairfax, South Carolina, when she was referred to Healthy Learners. She did have Medicaid, but it was still difficult for her to get proper eye care. Healthy Learners transported her to vision appointments at provider partners for several years.

"Without the glasses I received, my school work would have been much harder to read, especially the text books," said Alatyana.

She said Healthy Learners allowed her to focus on what she had to do as a student and not "will I be able to see the board? I wish I had glasses." She is now a student at the University of South Carolina Salkehatchie and hopes to transfer to the main campus in Columbia to major in theater. ♦



"Healthy Learners took some of my burden and made it their own and I will forever be grateful for that." – Alatyana

Thank You Nurses and Providers RECOGNIZING OUR MOST ACTIVE PARTNERS

Founded in 1992 through a collaborative effort between several community partners, Healthy Learners has always been about collaboration. Collaboration is a core value of Healthy Learners and collaboration with our partners is still key. We simply couldn't provide children with access to quality health care without school nurses, health care providers and supporters.

Each and every partner is critical to meeting unmet health care needs. In this issue, we want to recognize the school nurses and providers from the fall semester (August–December 2017) with the highest involvement in Healthy Learners programming.

The following school nurses referred the most students and/or the highest percentage of the total student enrollment at their schools. The providers listed delivered the most services in their program areas for the fall semester.

ALLENDALE

Nurse Chasity Boleman *Allendale Elementary*
Low Country Health Care System Pharmacy

DILLON

Nurse Kelly Smith *Latta Elementary*
Dillon Eye Care (*McKethan Gaddy*)

GEORGETOWN

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

GREENWOOD

Nurse Emily Polatty *Matthews Elementary*
Wingards Pharmacy

MIDLANDS

Nurse Yvette Copeland *St. Andrews Middle*
Nurse Carolyn Duff *AC Moore*
WellPartners Dental & Eye Health
(formerly Richland Dental Clinic)

Visit healthylearners.com/collaborative-partnerships to see a list of all current health care, business and community partners.

THANK YOU



Partner Profile

WELLPARTNERS

Children with dental pain are three times more likely to miss school than children who have access to good dental care*. WellPartners (formerly Richland Dental Clinic) has been providing free dental and eye care to children and adults in the Midlands region of South Carolina for more than 50 years to help keep children healthy and in school.

WellPartners has been a dental partner for Healthy Learners for 25 years. The partnership began in 1993 when Diane Bouknight, WellPartners children's dental clinic coordinator, met with the first director of Healthy Learners (then known as Health Reach). The two organizations were serving the same uninsured and under-insured children, so the partnership was a natural fit.

WellPartners connects community volunteers and partners to provide vital dental and vision care at no cost. Healthy Learners typically transports students to the WellPartners clinic on Tuesdays, but will transport students on other days as needed.

"Children's performance and school attendance will be affected if they are in pain with a toothache. Untreated decay can cause pain and infection that may lead to difficulty speaking, socializing and sleeping, as well as, poor overall health," said Diane. "Healthy Learners provides a valuable service with a way to the dentist for children in a loving and caring commute."

Healthy Learners Executive Director Jo Pauling-Jones recently met with the clinic's full-time dentist, Tamara Stockton, DDS, MAGD, to discuss the partnership and ensure it will continue for many years to come. WellPartners serves Healthy Learners students from both its Richland and Lexington locations. ♦

*Source: Wellpartners.org

Volunteer Profile

DR. JULIA MIKELL

Julia Mikell, DDS, moved to Columbia 24 years ago to practice dentistry. She soon heard about the Richland Dental Clinic (now WellPartners) from her new colleagues and thought it would be a good way to get involved in the community and a way to give back to children in need. Twenty-two years later, she still volunteers at the dental clinic two times each year. In that time, she has treated hundreds of children—including many Healthy Learners students—providing exams, cleanings, x-rays, oral hygiene education, and fillings and extractions. She also brings a hygienist and a dental resident with her each time she volunteers.

Dr. Mikell, who is one of many Healthy Learners provider partners, said she enjoys donating her time at WellPartners because it is a well-run program and "it is important to give back to the community and serve people who have primary health care needs beyond their financial abilities."

She also commented on the importance of good dental health for short- and long-term wellness.

"The key to dental health is early detection and prevention. By seeing these children in the dental clinic, we can prevent decay and infection and also educate them on the importance of dental care. Without the access to care that this dental clinic provides, these children would be vulnerable to dental pain, infection and tooth loss, which could have long-lasting negative effects in their future."

SAVE THE DATE

HEALTHY LEARNERS
**Champions
for Children
Golf Tournament**
IN MEMORY OF GEORGE YOUNGINER

2018
OCTOBER 24TH
FT. JACKSON GOLF CLUB

Aflac
2018 PREMIER EXCLUSIVE SPONSOR



HEALTHY LEARNERS

NEWS BRIEFS AND NOTES

John Garrison



Healthy Learners board officers,
(left to right) Matthew B. Roberts, Cleo
Richardson, Ed.D, Debbie Locklair and
Rich Williams



Welcome New Board Member and Board Officers :: Healthy Learners is pleased to welcome a new member to the Board of Trustees—**John Garrison**.

John brings valuable experience to the board and a passion for the mission of Healthy Learners. John is the chief compliance officer for Unum Group. Previously, he was Colonial Life's general counsel and a part of Colonial Life's senior management team. He has also served the South Carolina State Senate as director of research and attorney to the Banking and Insurance Committee and as staff counsel in the Office of Senate Research. He received his Juris Doctorate from the University of South Carolina School of Law. And, congratulations to the following board officers, who were recently elected or re-elected to their positions: **Matthew B. Roberts, Chair; Cleo Richardson, Ed.D, Vice Chair; Debbie Locklair, Secretary; Rich Williams, Treasurer.**

Congratulations Kim Morgan on 15 Years! :: In December, Healthy Learners recognized **Kim Morgan**, student services coordinator at the Midlands program, for 15 years of service. Executive Director Jo Pauling-Jones presented Kim with the award.



Kim Morgan

Champions for Children Golf Tournament Tops the Leaderboard

One-hundred sixty golfers hit the links in October at the Fort Jackson Golf Club in Columbia for the 18th annual Healthy Learners Champions for Children Golf Tournament in Memory of George Younginer. Thanks to the generous golfers, supporters, sponsors and volunteers, the event raised \$108,000 to support the mission of Healthy Learners meeting the unmet health needs of children. Special thanks 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 made the event a success.



Van Hauser

Van Hauser, who is a senior project manager with LCK in Columbia, was awarded the 2017 Healthy Learners Champion for Children Award at the golf tournament. Van has been a dedicated and loyal donor and supporter of Healthy Learners and the golf tournament since 2011.

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.



Aixa Rodriguez-Mariani

Welcome Aixa Rodriguez-Mariani, M.D. to Healthy Learners Georgetown

Healthy Learners welcomed **Aixa Rodriguez-Mariani, M.D.**, in August as program manager for Healthy Learners Georgetown. Dr. Rodriguez-Mariani, who is both a physician and autism advocate, is an excellent resource to the school nurses served by the Georgetown program and health care providers in assisting children who are in need and without resources. "As a parent of a now young adult with Autism, I have been advocating for children's needs for the last 19 years. I am excited to join Healthy Learners because it provides me the opportunity to combine my medical knowledge with my commitment to children's advocacy," said Rodriguez-Mariani.

Online Giving Events May 1 to Benefit Healthy Learners Healthy Learners is participating in two 24-hour online giving events May 1. Palmetto Giving Day will support 54 nonprofit organizations working in Georgetown County. Palmettogivingday.org. Also on May 1 is Midlands Gives. In addition to receiving the money donated, every gift made through MidlandsGives.org on that day helps the chances of Healthy Learners winning prizes given throughout the day ranging from \$500 to \$5,000. Watch our Facebook page and Twitter for more updates and links to donate.

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.



HEALTHY LEARNERS

A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System

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