

MERRY & BRIGHT *future*

NEWSLETTER

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Meet Ja'Shawn: A Bright Future Ahead

Meet Ja'Shawn! He is a nine-year old boy who loves playing football, wrestling with his two older brothers and going fishing with his dad. He loves special evenings going to KFC to get a Macaroni bowl after his mom finishes her shift of work there. Ja'Shawn lives with his father, two brothers, aunt, and grandmother downtown just a few blocks from his elementary school. He is bright, happy, creative and a real jokester.

Healthy Learners met Ja'Shawn through a referral from the school nurse. He was struggling to focus on school due to tooth pain. From his initial visit, it was discovered that he had five cavities. Three of his teeth with the cavities were rotting and needed to be extracted, and the two others needed fillings.

Getting Ja'Shawn to the dentist and getting the work needed would not be easy. His father was legally blind, suffering from a degenerative eye disease, and his mother's work schedule was challenging to coordinate with. They also were struggling to make ends meet for their family and needed help.

Healthy Learners met with Ja'Shawn's dad and helped him apply for Medicaid in South Carolina for all three of his sons, then coordinated with a partner dental provider to get Ja'Shawn and his two other brothers scheduled to see a dentist. Healthy Learners transported the boys from school, and made sure everything was set for Ja'Shawn and his brothers to receive care.

Ja'Shawn got the three rotten teeth "wiggled out" by the dentist in early October and got his fillings done later that month. This month, Ja'Shawn will be completing a regular cleaning to make sure all is well and will begin regular preventative care. He is now able to learn pain free.

Ja'Shawn is just one of thousands of children in our state struggling with a health barrier to learning. Would you consider providing a gift to help another child on their journey to a brighter future without health barriers to learning?



What's Inside

- Celebrating 30 Years
- Note from our Executive Director
- THRIVE Network
- Breanna's Story: It Takes a Village
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Putting the "Fun" in Fundraiser

Stay in touch

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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

In September, we celebrated 30 years of ministry in South Carolina. What started with one school nurse's desire to help a student struggling to see in her school (Diane O'Connor - pictured left), and the generosity of one man to meet the need (Al Pollard - pictured above), has now spread to serving thousands of children across 200 schools in 12 counties of South Carolina. We are so thankful for each opportunity we have had to change the trajectory of a child's life, and look forward to seeing how many more bright futures we can impact in the years to come - together with our amazing community.

Note from Executive Director

I have been blown away by the opportunities we have had this season to meet the needs of so many children struggling in our communities. Each of them carries such vibrancy and resiliency as they overcome challenges, and imagine

new hopes, dreams, and bright futures - all because their world has been opened up to new heights for learning and growth.







I can't help but to think of the familiar carol's words from "Oh Holy Night," "A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks, a new and glorious morn." This Christmas, we celebrate the love and hope we have in God sending his son to give us a future that is merry and bright. Together, we have the opportunity to share that same love and hope to the children we serve. This season, I am thankful for you - our dedicated family of supporters and partners - for making these bright futures possible.



Amy Splittgenber

Our Impact

This year we have seen record breaking need in providing access to essential medical care for South Carolina children. Here are just a few ways we've served students across the state this year.

-  **over 2200 students**
- 14 school districts**
-  **11,000 health services**
- 240 providers**   
- 95% referrals addressed**
-  **77,000 miles traveled**

"You guys are a blessing to me and my 4 kiddos to say the least! Y'all are getting my loves to all these appointments. I struggled before having no transportation of my own. You guys are always personable yet professional and informative!"

★★★★★ PARENT, UPSTATE

"You guys do a SUPER job supporting our students. Thank you for all you do!"

★★★★★ B. NEWTON, GREENWOOD 50 NURSE

30 YEARS. 30 PARTNERS.



Already considering 2023 New Years resolutions? How about providing the gift of learning every month of the year for a child in need by joining Healthy Learners THRIVE NETWORK!

The Thrive Network is made up of people who long to see all children healthy, happy, and able to meet their full potential! By committing to monthly giving, our Thrive Network members sustain Healthy Learners mission, as together, we remove hundreds of children's health barriers to learning every month with love and compassion.

As a member of our Thrive Network, you will be kept "in the know" about all the wonderful things going on at Healthy Learners through monthly insider email updates, resources, stories, and special opportunities to get involved!

It costs an average of \$618.45 (\$51.54/month) to provide a Healthy Learners student with everything they need on their healthcare journey for one whole year. Joining THRIVE with a monthly donation of any size can help us keep learners healthy in South Carolina.

We are looking for 30 new partners to create 30 bright futures for our 30th Anniversary. Would you consider joining the THRIVE NETWORK by committing to a monthly gift today?



Ready to Join THRIVE?

- Check "make it monthly" on your donation card
- Send your first monthly gift with the envelope provided.
- That's it! Welcome to the Network!

(Or skip the paperwork!)

Visit [Healthylearners.com/thrive](https://healthylearners.com/thrive)



Supporting Healthy Learners is a priority for me because there are so many children in need in our community. I give monthly because it is convenient for me and it helps Healthy Learners with cash flow and planning for the future.

- Kate, Thrive Member



Breanna's Story: It Takes a Village

Breanna was the second of four born into a loving family in a low-income household in South Carolina. She was a lover of learning and student government, with a desire to be a first-class communicator.

However, Breanna had one problem. She had a speech impediment. She struggled pronouncing anything starting with an "s" due to underdeveloped tongue coordination. Her mother wanted to help Breanna but had extremely limited flexibility at work. "I didn't have a family situation where I could make sure I made doctor appointments" Breanna shared. "It truly was Healthy Learners or no other option at the time."



BREANNA, 2003

Throughout middle and high school, Healthy Learners provided care coordination for Breanna to attend regular sessions with a speech pathologist, as well as other check up visits for oral health and vision.

Breanna overcame her speech impediment and went on to be a first generation collegiate and masters degree graduate. She is currently the Director of the Office of Advocacy and Success at Clemson University, living out her dream of being a professional communicator and presenter. Her life is a story of dedication to hard work, but she attributes much of her success to the village that raised her up - a village that included Healthy Learners.



BREANNA, TODAY



Looking for Volunteer Opportunities?

Are you passionate about helping children learn and thrive in your community? We need your help! We are looking for volunteers to help us impact more children.

Ways to Volunteer

- **Ride Along Buddy:** Ride along with students and staff members to appointments to help students feel even more love and compassion.
- **Care Team member:** Help student services coordinators schedule health visits and coordinate with parents and schools.
- **Car Line Crew Member/Team:** Introduce Healthy Learners to school parents during car line where Healthy Learners recently completed a health screening. Help us build the trust of parents new to our work.
- **Party Partner:** help introduce the mission of Healthy Learners to your friends by hosting a small gathering (8-12 people) at your home. You provide the people and we'll provide the inspiration – no asks! Just stories that will leave you encouraged and inspired!

To learn more about becoming a volunteer, please contact Christian Markle at 803-530-0002 or cmarkle@healthylearners.com.

Putting the "Fun" in Fundraising

This Fall, our Healthy Learners community participated in three fundraising events across the state. Our team had a great time seeing old friends and getting to know new ones! We so appreciated each person for participating with generosity and kindness to support the children we serve.



Adult Spelling Bee - Greenwood
Emerald High School



Songwriters in the Round - Columbia
Millstone at Adams Pond



Songwriters in the Round - Pawleys Island
The Heritage Club

Don't want to miss out on all of the amazing things Healthy Learners is doing? Subscribe to our email list. Scan the code below with you phone camera to join!



HEALTHY LEARNERS

A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System