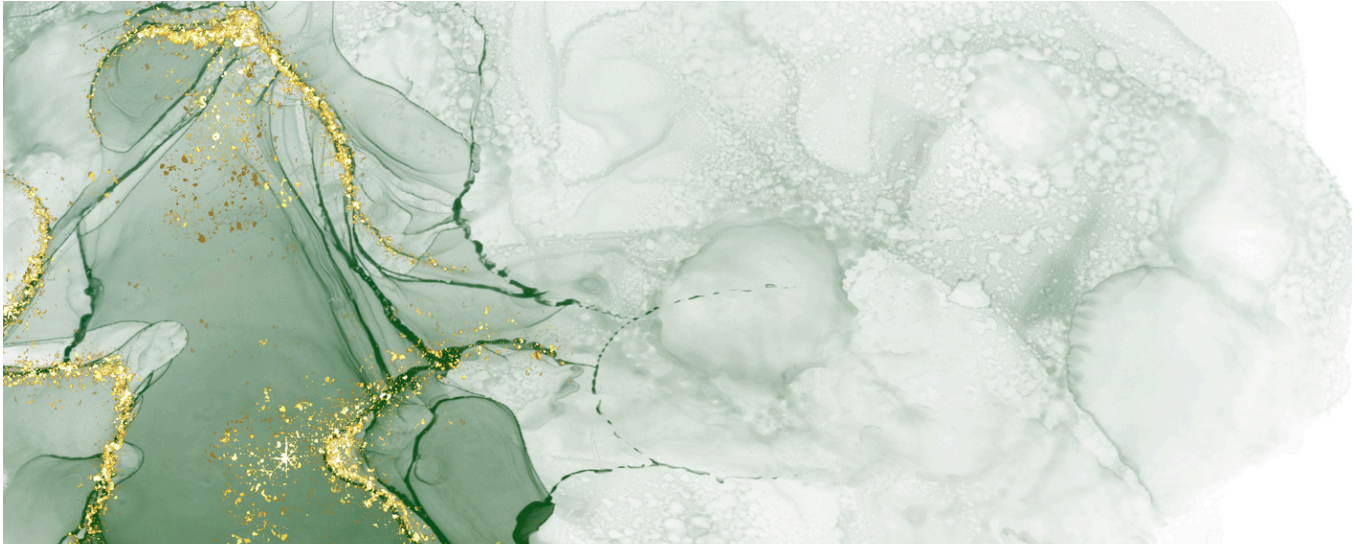




Health Sciences

NEWSLETTER



SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES OUTREACH

In November, the School of Health Sciences actively engaged with local high school students to share valuable information about careers in health sciences. On November 15th, Mrs. Rosa Faulkner and Mrs. Leslie Parrott visited Vance Charter School, while on November 19th, Dr. Kelly Eller and Mrs. Kassie Felts attended Warren County High School. These outreach efforts are part of our ongoing commitment to inspire and inform the next generation of health professionals.

Photos submitted by: Kelly Eller, EdD, MSN, RN



MEDICAL ASSISTING

From Medical Assistant to Director: A 36-Year Journey of Growth, Success, and Leadership



“My name is Renita Peace Timberlake, in 1989, I graduated from J. F. Webb High School. After completing High School I was looking for stability and a steady income and I began to work at a local factory. One day while packing boxes in a 90-degree attic surrounded by a fan blowing hot air, I recall thinking to myself, I want more for my life. I later secured a position at a local physician’s office as a receptionist. After several years of being in the workforce, I heard about a new program Vance Granville Community College was offering, in Medical Assisting. This sparked my interest, and I walked through the doors of Vance Granville Community College as a fresh-faced student, eager to begin my career in healthcare. Little did I know that the training I was about to receive would not only shape my future but would also set me on a path of growth, success, and leadership that would span more than three decades. The comprehensive education I received, both in clinical and administrative duties, gave me the foundation to confidently handle patient care, administrative tasks, and office management. What set me apart was not only the technical skills I learned but also the soft skills that I gained through interacting with patients and healthcare teams. This included empathy, communication, and problem-solving, which proved invaluable as I progressed in my career. In addition to the coursework, I spent numerous hours in clinical rotations at local medical offices and hospitals. The real-world experience gave me the confidence I needed to succeed. The instructors were amazing and always there to answer questions and provide guidance. There were some tough moments, and some days were harder than others but having God on my side, and the support of my professors and peers made a huge difference...”

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MEDICAL ASSISTING (CONTINUED)

From Medical Assistant to Director: A 36-Year Journey of Growth, Success, and Leadership (Continued)

“After Completing the Medical Assisting program at VGCC in May 2000, I graduated with a Medical Assisting Associate in Applied Science Degree. I continued working as a medical assistant at the local clinic. My days were spent managing patient appointments, taking vital signs, assisting with exams, and helping with medical billing. It was a fast-paced job that required multitasking, organization, and attention to detail, all skills I had honed during my training. Over time, my supervisor noticed my leadership potential and I was promoted to office manager after just 5 years. As office manager, I was responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the practice, including patient relations, scheduling, and managing a team of medical assistants. After about 10 years in a management role, I was promoted to Director of Physician Practices, Primary Care, overseeing multiple departments and ensuring the clinics ran efficiently. The transition from manager to director was significant but my experience as a medical assistant and office manager prepared me well. I have had the privilege of working with a team of talented professionals, and it was my job to inspire and guide them toward achieving the clinic’s goals.

The best part of my journey was watching the clinic evolve and knowing that my contributions played in that growth. I’ve seen the healthcare field change dramatically over the years. Through it all, my foundation as a medical assistant has been a constant source of strength, helping me navigate challenges and remain grounded in what truly matters: patient care.

Looking back on my 36 years in the healthcare industry, I am filled with pride and gratitude. The training I received as a medical assistant at Vance Granville Community College was the steppingstone that led me to where I am today. I am grateful for the knowledge I gained and the opportunities that allowed me to grow both professionally and personally. My journey from medical assistant to director is a testament to the power of hand work, determination, continued learning, and a passion for helping others. I’m proof that with the right foundation, the sky’s the limit.”

Respectfully submitted,

Renita P. Timberlake, CMA (AAMA)
Director Physician Practices
Granville Health Systems

NURSING

Nursing and Theatre Collaboration

In an exciting collaboration between the Nursing Faculty and the VGCC Drama Department for the fall production of *Agnes of God*, Dr. Brande Mcilroy and Mrs. Rosa Faulkner worked closely with the drama cast to design and create realistic props that allowed a character to bleed on stage, using nursing supplies. This creative partnership highlighted the innovative ways our faculty contribute to the arts while bridging the gap between healthcare and performance.

-Photos submitted by: Brande T. Mcilroy DNP, MSN, RN, CCRN-R, CNL-R





A Transformative Mission Trip to Kenya

Dr. Erica Fleming Program Head of Pharmacy Technology and Histotechnology

Over the fall break, I had the incredible privilege of participating in a mission trip to Lari, Kenya, with Projects of Hope (POH). This dedicated NGO addresses pressing global issues affecting children, such as access to clean water, nutrition, and healthcare. Since 2012, we have partnered with local communities to install water tanks, establish dairy farms, and run medical clinics, making a tangible difference in the lives of many.

As a member of the board of directors for POH, I collaborate closely with our CEO and Medical Director to assess the impact of previous missions, analyze medical trends, and coordinate with local suppliers to ensure we have the appropriate medication inventory. Serving as the Pharmacist for the Medical Mission Clinic since 2017, my role involves formulary adjustments, dosing consultations, and training volunteers to provide on-the-spot tech support. This mission allows me to apply my pharmaceutical knowledge in the most fundamental yet impactful ways. Over the years, we have treated over 500 children, each encounter a testament to our commitment.

The need for experienced medical professionals in impoverished areas is critical. Increasing access to healthcare is essential for early diagnosis and treatment, connecting children to regional facilities for advanced care.

we could be a source of hope for them, inspiring us as a team who received so much more from them than we ever gave in our short time together.

Each day was a labor of love. We poured out all we had, did whatever needed to be done, and took on whatever role was asked of us to ensure we met our mission's objectives. Each night, we retreated to Brakenhurst Conference and Retreat Center to reflect on the day's mission, its impact on the team, and to plan for the next day's objectives.



The Next Mission

Looking ahead, next year's mission will be our largest yet, as we adopt a school with over 500 students. This presents a unique opportunity for students in the School of Health Sciences to apply for roles supporting the medical arm of the mission. Such international service will not only enhance their skills but also deepen their empathy as future practitioners.

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Vance-Granville Community College (VGCC) for their unwavering support. The college's vision of being a catalyst for strong communities aligns perfectly with our mission at Projects of Hope. My experiences with POH embody the mission and vision of both VGCC and POH.

The field medicine we practice resembles that of rural or indigenous environments, where every aspect of my training—from therapeutic substitutions to dosage calculations—comes into play. Each child is seen by a full medical team (CNA, RN, MD, PharmD), and we strive to connect with them on a personal level, learning about their dreams and aspirations, and showing them what is possible beyond their current circumstances. This year, we provided care to 168 children, with 53 referrals for optical and dental needs to regional clinics.

Being the daughter of a builder and contractor, I am no stranger to construction sites, power tools, and manual labor. Our building project made significant strides: we wired the entire school for electricity, constructed a kitchen, paved a walkway in the middle of the school

courtyard, and built planter boxes to grow vegetables, ensuring the children have nutritious meals year-round.

With the medical clinic wrapping up earlier this year, I was able to join the ladies on the construction crew. I made my dad proud as I showed them how to handle a manual saw to cut the planks for the planter boxes. Later, we swung sledgehammers to break rocks down to gravel for the underlayer of the paved walkway. We then planted saplings of spinach, cabbage, carrots, and potatoes in the garden we built to supplement the food for the children of the school. Right before we packed up each day, we met the kids on the playing field, where they sang and danced with an unspeakable joy radiating from them. Their joy was palpable—joy that we came, joy that they had meals that day, and joy that





At Projects of Hope, we believe that every child deserves access to basic needs like clean water, nutritious food, and the opportunity to pursue their dreams. Your support can help us create sustainable change in impoverished communities. Whether through donations, volunteering, or spreading the word about our mission, you can be a catalyst for hope and transformation. Visit our website to learn more about how you can get involved and help us continue our vital work in Kenya and beyond. Together, we can empower children to build a brighter future!

School of Health Science Students Apply for the 2025 Mission

If you are interested in being a part of the 2025 Mission please see Dr. Fleming program head of Pharmacy Technology, to discuss the application process and requirements. All VGCC School of Health Science students and graduates are eligible to apply.



Support the 2025 Mission

This experience has been transformative, and I am excited about the future impact we can make together. Thank you to everyone who has supported this journey!

Vance-Granville Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate degrees. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Vance-Granville Community College. Vance-Granville Community College is an equal opportunity institution. The college serves all students regardless of race, creed, color, age, sex, national origin, or disabling conditions. Vance-Granville Community College is



RADIOGRAPHY

JRCERT 2024 Excellence in Education Conference

Radiography Program Head Dr. Angela Thomas and Clinical Coordinator Jamisha Twitty had the opportunity to attend the JRCERT 2024 Excellence in Education Conference November 11-12 in Rosemont, IL. JRCERT is the Radiography program's accrediting agency, so the conference provided educators, administrators, and key stakeholders the opportunity to gather, collaborate, and share knowledge on the advancement of medical imaging. Engaging presentations and meaningful discussions empowered attendees to address emerging challenges and shape the future of excellence in education. Along with the thought-provoking seminars and networking opportunities, there was plenty of dancing and laughter as all celebrated CEO Leslie Winter's "Last Dance" with the JRCERT, as she plans to retire next year after serving for more than 30 years.

-Submitted by: Jamisha Twitty, M.H.S. RT (R)

