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South Piedmont Offers Associate in a Year Program

South Piedmont Community College has learned through COVID-19 that flexible learning options are essential learning tools for students, not just during a pandemic, but for meeting the individualized needs of today's busy adults. Starting in August, SPCC will offer its first program that enables students to earn an Associate in Arts in a Year. Any high school graduate is eligible to enroll in the program. Launching this fall, the inaugural class will be limited to 24 students at a tuition of \$1,500 for the entire year-long program. In addition, this first cohort will be provided a laptop, headset, and internet hotspot to help ensure and support student success.

"The AA in a Year provides access to education for working adults during a time when students wish to stay closer to home," said Dr. Diane Paige, dean of arts and sciences. "The program is designed to enable college-bound students to continue their studies by creating a unique educational experience for students that takes the guesswork out of degree planning."

Students enrolled in the fast-track degree program will be able to take two classes at a time during five week blocks, either online or in-person. The program begins August 15 on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and on Saturday mornings to allow those with jobs to attend classes. Experienced instructors will help guide students through the year-long program by pairing relevant classes together offering a more cohesive experience.

"Students get the experience of working in a tightly-knit cohort and working closely with faculty," explained Paige. "Additionally, the program is highly affordable, taught by engaging faculty, and consists of fully transferable credits." Students enrolled in this program will also be eligible for our Road2Wingate pathway where they can enter as a junior at Wingate University and earn their four-year degree in only two additional years. The total tuition cost for one year at South Piedmont plus two years at Wingate would be \$6,500, which is well below the state average.

To learn more about the Associate in Arts in a Year program, visit the SPCC website: www.spcc.edu/associate-in-a-year.

Anson County 4-H'ers Virtually Attend Annual Electric Congress

Two delegates, Quenton Cromartie and Keyshawn Tillman, and one volunteer, Betty Garris, represented Anson County at the 73rd annual 4-H Electric Congress held July 7-8. This event was held virtually this year.

Approximately 150 4-H'ers, adult leaders and N.C. Cooperative Extension agents from 39 counties attended the two-day event. Since 1947 Duke Energy and Dominion Energy have sponsored the annual congress to emphasize electrical energy concepts, energy conservation and safety working with electricity. The 4-H electric program is one of the most popular activities among Tar Heel 4-H'ers. The 4-H program is the youth education program of North Carolina Cooperative Extension, based at North Carolina State and North Carolina A&T State universities.

When asked what they learned at Electric Congress that they could bring back to Anson County, Quenton stated, "I learned from Electric Congress that it doesn't take high level training to learn how to be safe with electricity."

Keyshawn stated that he would strongly recommend Electric Congress to other youth his age. According to Keyshawn, "Electric Congress builds a foundation of knowing the electric business and getting to know the basics of electricity in general."

4-H participation is open to all youth regardless of sex, race, religion or national origin. For more information about 4-H in Anson County contact Samuel Cole, 4-H Agent at scole3@ncsu.edu or 704-694-2915.

NC Residents Warned Not to Plant Unsolicited Foreign Seed Sent to Them

North Carolina residents who have received seed shipments that they did not order from China or other foreign sources are advised not to plant these seeds because they could be a pathway for introduction of invasive species, insects and plant diseases.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has been contacted by numerous people who have received the seeds, which are likely the product of an international internet scam known as 'brushing.'

"According to the Better Business Bureau, foreign, third-party sellers use your address and Amazon information to generate a fake sale and positive review to boost their product ratings," said Phil Wilson, director of the Plant Industry Division.

"Seeds are just one of the items used in this scam, however, you could receive other inexpensive items such as rubber bands, plastic toys, or empty bags." This type of international shipment of plant material is unlawful and NCDA&CS asks anyone who received one of these unsolicited foreign shipments to save the contents along with all shipping labels and contact the Plant Industry Division toll free at 800-206-9333 or email at newpest@ncagr.gov. Plant Industry staff will contact you to gather information and pick up the package.

North Carolina residents are not in violation of any regulations if they received these shipments, but they are the key to identifying and stopping future shipments.

The North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services website is www.ncagr.gov.

Respiratory Etiquette - Stop Germs at the Source

Here are a few tips for those suffering from a cold or worse, to not impose on others around them.

- 1) Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your upper sleeve when you cough or sneeze.
- 2) Do not cover your mouth or nose with your hands when you sneeze.
- 3) Always place your used tissue in the waste basket and wash your hands.
- 4) Please wear a mask to protect others and yourself.
- 5) Coughing persons should sit at least six feet away from others. Try to go outside or to an area where you are alone.
- 6) Wash your hands often with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.



NC MedAssist to Give Away Free Medicine in Wadesboro Friday

NC MedAssist is holding a Mobile Free Pharmacy Event in Anson County this Friday, August 7. The event, which is in collaboration with Atrium Health, is open to any individual or family needing over-the-counter medications. The event will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. at First Baptist Church, located at 309 Lee Avenue in Wadesboro. Participants must be at least 18 years old to receive medicine. No identification is required.

Unlike previous Mobile Free Pharmacy events, this one will be held as a drive-thru service only. Participants are highly encouraged to order their over-the-counter medicine online at bit.ly/OTCAnson. For those individuals unable to register online, Atrium Health employees will provide generic bags of medicine.

"We have completed revamped our Giveaway Day in order to keep our participants, volunteers, and staff as safe as possible," said Misty Moore, Senior Development Director at NC MedAssist. "We came together with Atrium Health and identified such a need in the Wadesboro community. With so many restrictions in place we had to take a look at how we can still provide this service while keeping everyone safe and healthy."

The Mobile Free Pharmacy events have served upwards of 800 people, at times. In order to comply with local recommended guidelines, all participants will remain in their vehicles while volunteers retrieve their medicine. For those individuals unable to register online, Atrium Health employees will be available to complete registration forms for each person, limiting touch points.

"We are looking forward to bringing the NC MedAssist Mobile Free Pharmacy to Anson County, especially during such difficult times," said Dave Anderson, Facility Executive of Atrium Health Anson. "The Mobile Free Pharmacy event is an opportunity for us to make an impact on the health and wellness of the community. We look forward to helping provide health resources and education to individuals and families in this community."

At the event, information will also be available about enrolling in the NC MedAssist Free Pharmacy Program, which mails free prescription medications directly to a patient's home. NC MedAssist's overall goal is to help ease the burden for those in need; it is aiding people who are making the choice between buying food and purchasing life-saving medication. Over the last fiscal year, NC MedAssist distributed over \$74 million in free prescription and over-the-counter medication statewide. Of course, this would not be possible without the numerous, dedicated volunteers.

NC MedAssist is a statewide nonprofit pharmacy, founded in 1997. The organization provides free prescription medication to low-income, uninsured North Carolinians. NC MedAssist offers three programs that address the needs of children and adults: the Free Pharmacy Program, the Mobile Free Pharmacy Program, and the Transitional Job Program. Learn more about NC MedAssist right now at www.medassist.org. You can also visit their Facebook and Twitter pages, or contact them to find out how you can help.



Health Department Now Offers Drive-Up Testing for COVID-19

This is a release from the Anson County Health Department: The Anson County Health Department has begun COVID-19 testing through LabCorp. Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a new coronavirus that has spread throughout the world. COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.

You can become infected by coming into close contact (about 6 feet or two arm lengths) with a person who has COVID-19. COVID-19 is primarily spread from person to person. You can become infected from respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. You may also be able to get it by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then by touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.

Covid-19 cases are rising in Anson County. As of this release there are a total of 306 cases, 13 active cases, and 2 deaths. Public health officials are trying to contain the virus through early identification and isolation of people who are infected, and contact tracing to alert people who may have been exposed before they potentially expose others. All of this starts with rapid and accurate testing of people who may be infected.

The Anson County Health Department is now providing drive-up testing clinic on Wednesdays by appointment only, along with available appointments throughout the week. Please call our number (704) 694-5188 for more information. Please refer to the DHHS COVID-19 dashboard for more information, including number of cases from other counties at covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard.

306 of Reported Cases of COVID-19 in Anson County

As of Monday, August 3 the Anson County Health Department posted that Anson County had 306 reported cases of COVID-19. 13 of those cases are active. At that point they had discharged 293 cases, 291 to baseline health and two deaths.

On July 27 the Health Department reported 285 cases and on July 20 256 cases were reported.

Anson County's Unemployment Rate was 7.9% in June, Down from 10.1% in May

Anson County's unemployment rate for June moved lower, to 7.9%. That was down from May's 10.1% rate and April's 8.2% rate. In March the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%. Statewide the unemployment rate was 7.9% in June, down from May's 12.7% rate. The statewide unemployment rate in April was 12.5% and March was 4.2%.

In June 2019 the unemployment rate in Anson County was 4.9%, and statewide the rate was 4.4%.

Anson's total labor force in June was 10,252. Of that number 9,446 were employed and 806 were unemployed. In May the total labor force was 10,440, with 9,384 employed and 1,056 unemployed.

Unemployment rates (not seasonally adjusted) decreased in all 100 of North Carolina's counties in June. Scotland County had the highest unemployment rate at 11.5 percent, while Duplin had the lowest at 5.4 percent.

All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced decreases. Among the metro areas, Fayetteville had the highest rate at 10.0 percent and New Bern had the lowest at 6.7 percent. The June not seasonally adjusted statewide rate was 7.9 percent.

When compared to the same month last year, not seasonally adjusted unemployment rates increased in all 100 counties. All 15 of the state's metro areas experienced rate increases.

The number of workers employed statewide (not seasonally adjusted) increased in June by 214,058 to 4,439,240, while those unemployed decreased by 232,889 to 380,123. Since June 2019, the number of workers employed statewide decreased 445,126, while those unemployed increased 166,971.

Covid-19 Food Support at BRLC

Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center's Emergency Food Pantry will distribute packs of chicken leg quarters and cartons of eggs this Friday, August 7 at 3 p.m. until all items are gone. This outreach is designed to help families and individuals that are experiencing a need for a food supplement.

BRLC is located at 13349 Highway 742 North in Burnsville, across from the Fire Department.

For more information call 704-826-8182 or visit www.burnsvillele.org.

Burnsville Recreation & Learning Center Director Carol Smith and the Board of Directors would like to thank all youth, adult volunteers, the Burnsville Fire & Rescue, Anson County officials, local churches, businesses and private donors for your continued support.

Community Outreach Offers Household Items on August 29

The Lamb of God Church in Wadesboro will hold a Community Outreach Event on Saturday, August 29 at 10 a.m. They are offering household items and paper products on a first come, first served basis.

The event will be held at 118 West Wade Street in Wadesboro.

If you would like to donate or volunteer for the event, please call 843-623-3777. The website is www.logomchurch.com.