

PEARLS OF HAMPTON COUNTY



MEMBER NEWS

Connecting women who care with causes that matter.

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Rhonda Willis
Chair

Glenda (Rusty) Belote

Kari Foy

Peggy Grill

Latoya Robinson

Sharon Shealy

Becky Young

March 2020

Message From Our Chair

Amid some uncertain days, I know many of you are still giving selflessly to the communities in Hampton County. Times of hardship behoove the hearts and minds of people like you, and organizations like our giving circle, to act and care for those around us - our families, our neighbors, our friends, our children, our elderly. As Helen Keller once said, "The unselfish effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves."

Our lives may temporarily be inconvenienced by social distancing and even financial hardship, but our acts of kindness will never be forgotten when we share what we have with someone who doesn't, when we call to check on a neighbor, when we take care of each other and when we use the time we have at home to enjoy our children. With every difficult situation, there is much to learn about what is truly important.

On behalf of the PEARLS Advisory Board, I wish to recognize our many health and medical professionals who tirelessly work now and continue to work in the days ahead, putting the well-being of others ahead of their own to control the spread of COVID-19. Our appreciation also extends to our educators who are supporting families through virtual learning and implementing a means of service that ensures our children receive two meals daily while schools are closed. For the other unknown Hampton County heroes who are working behind the scenes through their job, church or home to help others, PEARLS thanks you, too.

In closing, the PEARLS Advisory Board wants to thank the members who responded to our recent letter asking you to renew or join your membership. It is our members' and PEARLS sponsors' joint giving that enables us to award grants each year

with projects that make a difference in Hampton's communities. We look forward to announcing our 2020 grant recipients soon!



Take care. Be smart. Stay healthy.

Rhonda

Rhonda Willis
PEARLS Chair

PEARLS Annual Meeting - Update

This Year's Meeting Has Been Canceled

Each year, PEARLS holds an Annual Meeting that is open to the public. All residents of Hampton County and the surrounding area are always invited to attend. Unfortunately, due to stay-at-home orders and general health precautions, we will be unable to hold the event this year.

A part of the meeting each year includes the announcement of competitive grant awards and the presentation of checks to grant recipients. This year, we will make alternate plans for making these announcements. We will inform you as soon as a decision has been made.

Lowcountry Community COVID-19 Response Fund

How You Can Help

Dear Members:

As many of our neighbors struggle with hardships and consequences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Foundation of the Lowcountry has responded by creating the Lowcountry Community COVID-19 Response Fund. The fund will rapidly deploy resources to community-based, frontline nonprofit organizations addressing the COVID-19 pandemic throughout the Lowcountry, including Hampton County. The Community Foundation plans to match the first \$100,000 in donations. If you would like to contribute, donate at cflowcountry.civicore.com/covid. You can also mail a check to:

Community Foundation of the Lowcountry
P.O. Box 23019
Hilton Head Island, SC 29925

**On your check, please indicate "COVID-19" in the memo line.*

Grant Awards

2020 PEARLS Grant Recipients

It is the case that many people in the community have heard about PEARLS, but know little about the organization. Founded by a group of local women, the primary purpose of the group is to raise funds that can be used to help others in the Hampton community.

While PEARLS funds some of its own charitable projects, a major part of its activity is focused on helping to support other charities and organizations that provide some type of direct service in the Hampton community. Awards are made annually through a grant process in which any local service group can participate.

At its March meeting, the PEARLS Advisory Board reviewed the applications submitted for its 2020 grant funding. Three applications were awarded full funding for their grants.

Because our Annual Meeting has been cancelled and we will not be able to recognize these organizations at that time, we will send out an alternate communication making the announcement.

Membership Renewal

Send in Your Renewal by Mail

If you have renewed your membership in response to the recent mailing, Thank You! You may now ignore this!

Otherwise, if you have not yet renewed your membership, send your check while you're thinking about it. Because this year's annual meeting has been canceled, the check will need to be sent to:

Community Foundation of the Lowcountry
P.O. Box 23019
Hilton Head Island, SC 29925

**Note on your check that it is for a PEARLS annual membership.*

Member Spotlight

Spotlight on Hannah Priester

It seems important to pause from time to time to consider how an organization like PEARLS was created and to recall the women who were among the founding members that made it successful. In coming issues, we will fondly recognize some of the

founding and early members.

A long-time educator in the Hampton area, Hannah Priester has been a local teacher and a principal. She is now retired but is still actively committed to education in the area as a current member of the Hampton District One School Board. She served as one of the founding members of PEARLS several years ago and has continued her commitment to the organization through her current active work with PEARLS Girls.



Hannah Priester

Hannah feels the local community needs to know more about what is being done to help girls learn the value of education beyond high school - including college visits. She has been actively involved with the PEARLS summer camps, which have provided opportunities for the PEARLS Girls to learn new recreational skills as well as develop swimming skills. She was surprised at the number of girls who had never tried swimming until they participated in the week-long camp.

Noting that her friends in the area come from many walks of life, Hannah has maintained contact with many of her former students. She indicated that she is sometimes disappointed that more of those students who have had successful careers in other places have not been able to return to Hampton because of the lack of a range of job opportunities here. However, she does enjoy seeing those of her former students who have remained in the area and are often found providing the services that she uses.

When asked why she helped plan and organize PEARLS, she said, "I joined PEARLS because I think it's a great way to help others in our county. I love the opportunities we have been able to provide ... it's all about helping somebody."

PEARLS Advisory Board

Upcoming Meetings

The upcoming Advisory Board Meetings are planned to be held on **April 2** at 5:30 p.m. and on **May 14** at 5:30 p.m.

Because of stay-at-home regulations, the April meeting will be held via conference call. As of right now, the May meeting is still scheduled to be conducted at Hampton United Methodist Church. An in-person meeting for May, however, is subject to change.

Newsletter Submissions

Do you have an idea for an upcoming newsletter?

To submit relevant items to be considered for this newsletter,

send the information to Rusty Belote, PEARLS Newsletter
Editor, at wmumsu73@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Rusty

Glenda (Rusty) Belote

PEARLS of Hampton County
is a fund of

