



# Changing Lives

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Personal Care Assistant training

## Greetings!

We're pleased to kick-off this first issue of our *Changing Lives* newsletter and share it with you, our donors! In this first issue, we'll catch you up on what the Foundation is doing and share news of our progress.

Our goals for *Changing Lives* are simple: (1) Deliver interesting stories about the transformative work you are making possible through your gifts to the Foundation and (2) Share those stories in a way that is informative and thoroughly readable.

We will be fine-tuning this publication with each issue and welcome your comments and suggestions. In return, we promise to use your feedback to make every issue worthwhile reading. ♦

## On Our Way to 2011

The Foundation is making real progress toward accomplishing our mission of raising education attainment levels in Patrick County. Here are a few highlights of that progress.

### College Access Program

- Assisted Patrick County High School (PCHS) students in securing nearly \$2.7 million in college financial aid since 2002
- Awarded 114 "Last Dollar" Scholarships and committed \$427,500 in aid to PCHS seniors
- SAT scores are up an average of 242 points for 31 PCHS students who participated in Foundation-sponsored SAT Prep activities earlier this year. (Scores are as of March 2006.)

### GED Promotion Project

- Patrick County now ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> among 44 rural Virginia counties in number of GEDs awarded per 1,000 residents, up from 43<sup>rd</sup>.
- Number of GED graduates rose 153% from 2003 to 2005, from 19 in 2003 to 48 in 2005; enrollment up 42%, from 101 in 2003 to 143 in 2005.
- Committed \$114,000 in \$1,000 GED graduate incentives

Please see *On Our Way* on page 3

## College Access: Preparing for Tomorrow

By Susan Huff and Jennifer Shaver

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*“...children begin to form impressions very early in their school careers that affect whether or not they will later pursue college or tech school.”*

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So much is happening in College Access this spring! We began 2006 where we left off in 2005—by working hard to increase “early college awareness” among elementary school students and their parents. We’re reaching out to children in grades 4–7 to encourage them to begin exploring careers and education beyond high school. Studies tell us that children begin to form impressions very early in their school careers that affect whether or not they will later pursue college or tech school. We’ve been busy since January meeting with 4<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> graders in each of the county’s elementary schools and have been excited to see the students’ high level of interest and enthusiasm!

Another component of our College Access program is the campus tour. We have just completed our spring tours of Ferrum College and Radford University for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders. Campus tours are particularly important for those young people who have never been on a college campus, because they help students develop a feeling of familiarity and comfort with the campus environment. Eventually, we hope to include even younger students in our campus tour program.

We know our students will need more than just an interest in college so, with funding assistance from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, we’ve invested in an expanded SAT Prep project to help raise students’ SAT scores. High SAT (college entrance exam) scores are important because they provide students with a greater choice of colleges and wider access to financial aid. We can now provide students with their choice of SAT study formats, including on-line and CD-based study, special for-credit classes, and after-school and intensive summer workshops. We believe that having a variety of flexible study methods available will encourage more students to take the SAT and better prepare them to score well on it. And, thanks to our donors, we are able to waive the cost of the SAT testing fee for low-income students.



Fall 2005 College Day at Patrick County High School

We have big plans for finishing the year with our seniors! They are currently busy finalizing their college and tech school choices, reviewing financial aid packages and visiting campuses. On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, we’re sponsoring a special program for their parents to help prepare them for their students’ transition to postsecondary education. Then later in May, we’ll host a panel discussion on college life for our seniors. Panelists will be former PCHS graduates who are currently attending college.

To round out the year, we’ll be taking part in the upcoming annual PCHS honors banquet to celebrate student achievement and to award scholarships. Finally, once school is out, we’ll be busy collecting and reviewing applications for Foundation “Last Dollar” Scholarships. Spring is a busy and exciting time in the Foundation’s College Access program! ◇

## Workforce Training: Training for the Community

Over the past year, the Foundation has formed partnerships with local healthcare providers to support the training of entry-level health workers for our community. Through these partnerships, we are helping increase the number of critical entry-level healthcare workers available in our communities AND raising the job-skill levels of our citizens. When developing these training partnerships, the Foundation insists that the primary benefits resulting from the training accrue to those trained. Partnerships like these are good for us all.

Since last June, the Foundation has worked with the local office of Team Nurse, a personal home health care and supplemental staffing agency, to offer training for Personal Care Assistants (PCAs). Twenty-four Patrick County residents have been certified as PCAs thus far through three classes of this 40-hour program. Classes are held at the Foundation office and instructors are provided by Team Nurse. Another PCA class is scheduled for mid-June.

In February, the Foundation joined with R. J. Reynolds-Patrick County Memorial Hospital to offer training for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). This was the first time in several years that the CNA program has been offered through the hospital. Classes ran from February through mid-March and were held at the hospital. Instruction was provided by hospital nursing staff. Eight Patrick residents completed this 160-hour CNA training. A second CNA class is planned for the fall.

A second course, Basic Medical Terminology, was offered on a trial-basis in February as part of this new partnership and will be taught again later in the year. ◇



March 2006 CNA graduates with instructional and administrative staff from R. J. Reynolds-Patrick County Memorial Hospital

### On Our Way from page 1

#### Workforce Training Program

- Trained 508 County adults through 32 Foundation-sponsored classes in 6 programs/courses
- Invested more than \$118,000 in job training for County adults
- Launched 3 new worker training programs since January 2006 and a fourth is planned, all in addition to those already underway ◇

(NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, data given is cumulative. For more information, please visit our website: [www.patrickfoundation.net](http://www.patrickfoundation.net).)

## GED Promotion: Creating Change, One Person at a Time

There was a time in Patrick County when few jobs required a high school diploma. Those times are gone. Most jobs today require *at least* a high school diploma; those that don't pay very low wages. If Patrick County is to rebuild its economy, its citizens must be able to secure good jobs paying fair wages. But first the education level of the County workforce must be addressed. Communities with a high percentage of adults without a high school diploma will find it increasingly difficult to attract the attention of businesses seeking to relocate to rural areas. Here, 43% of residents 21 years of age and older do not have a high school diploma. This is a significant hurdle to rebuilding our local economy, but it is one we, as a community, can overcome.

When the Foundation began in 2001, many County adults had been laid off and were receiving benefits through the Federal Trade Act. This program provides financial assistance to those who lose their jobs as a result of international trade. Through it, laid-off Patrick workers were paid while they went back to school to complete a high school diploma or learn new job-skills. Since Trade Act benefits are time-limited, they have now expired for most County workers. With the expiration of these Trade Act benefits, we lost a significant financial incentive for our residents to go back to school. The result has been a dramatic drop in the flow of adults entering the County's GED program.

Through the efforts of the Foundation and the Patrick County Public Schools Adult Education

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program, the County has made excellent progress in raising the number of GED graduates since 2001. Patrick now ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> among 44 rural Virginia counties in the number of GEDs awarded per 1,000 residents. When the Foundation began its GED Promotion Project, the County ranked 43<sup>rd</sup>. In June 2005, a record number of adults completed their GED. Patrick County's future, however, depends on its ability to continue to grow both its GED enrollment and graduation numbers.

Together, the Foundation and the Adult Education program are aggressively looking for new ways to bring more adults back to school to get their GED. We're exploring the use of creative recruitment and marketing techniques and new incentive programs. We're seeking ways to communicate more clearly and directly with those without a high school diploma.

Change takes time. The GED Promotion Project is all about change—personal change and community change. It will take an all-out community effort to create an environment in Patrick in which education is our top priority. But when that happens, education and knowledge will be prized and their pursuit encouraged and applauded. We think that's a dream worth chasing...and catching! ◇



Class 2005 GED graduate and his proud family