

CCGA Hosts Service-Learning Symposium to Showcase Student, Faculty Work

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Krystle Binion, a nursing student at College of Coastal Georgia, sees service-learning as an opportunity to push herself out of the campus bubble and make a difference in the local community.



College of Coastal Georgia nursing students Lauren Booth, from left, Erica Gillespie, Krystle Binion, and Alphonse Henry explain their service project to assistant professor of nursing Beverly Rowe on April 24 during a service-learning symposium at the college.
Bobby Haven/The Brunswick News

This semester, Binion and three classmates put that idea into action by collaborating with Brunswick High School to educate a group of senior girls about the self-esteem, peer pressure and alcohol and drug awareness issues that go along with the annual prom season.

The group then selected two underprivileged students who did not have the means to attend prom this year and collected donated dresses, make-up and other accessories, to help the girls go to prom.

"They really responded well to it, and they felt beautiful and they felt important," Binion said.

To showcase the project at CCGA's Service-Learning Symposium on Monday, Binion and her partners donned prom dresses and lab coats and created a poster to share the project with their fellow students and the community.

CCGA's fifth annual Service-Learning Symposium included an awards ceremony for students and faculty who exhibited excellence this school year in their service-learning activities and a poster showcase of the nearly 50 projects completed this year.

"This is one of my favorite events of the year, when we get to showcase the wonderful service-learning projects that students, faculty and community partners have collaborated on throughout the academic year," said Kimberly Mannahan, director of service-learning and undergraduate research at CCGA.

Coastal broke its personal record this past fall for the number of service-learning courses offered. A total of 29 course sections were taught across academic subject areas including psychology, nursing, English, history, health informatics, public administration, teacher preparation, business, biology and radiology.

The year before, 16 service-learning courses were offered.

"Four years ago I went to the first one of these (symposiums), and it is now a completely different feel in the service-learning culture and community," said CCGA president Greg Aloia on Monday.

Tracy Pellett, provost and vice president for academic affairs, said the service-oriented mindset of CCGA's students and faculty sets the campus apart from most.

"There aren't many things we know in education that can have as tremendous of an impact, not only on other students but also on the community, than service-learning," Pellett said.