

# Nursing Students Provide Health Screenings at The Well

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A group of College of Coastal Georgia nursing students got away from the classroom Friday to put their education into action.

The students set up shop at The Well, a homeless day shelter on Gloucester Street in Brunswick, and provided free blood pressure screenings along with health resource information and kits to the shelter's clients.



The three-hour screening event was part of a service-learning project for the community health nursing course, taught by Nicole Masano, an assistant professor of nursing at CCGA.

“They are doing health screens, blood pressure checks and just talking to them about different health issues,” Masano said. “Then they have a lot of educational stuff that they’re giving them, and resource papers, to let them know what’s available in the community. They have a lot of options.”

The students in the class crafted their own service learning project, from beginning to end. The process included coming up with a project idea, connecting with The Well and setting up the screening site at the center.

“They have done a wonderful job on this,” Masano said.

The students also wrote grants and received money from the college’s Center for Service Learning to put together bags of health basics, including Tylenol, feminine hygiene products, Band-Aids, water bottles and socks.

The students wanted to provide health information and resources to an under-served local population, said John Bennett, a senior nursing student in the class, and to make The Well’s clients more aware of the services available in the area.

“There’s a lot available in this area,” he said. “More than I had realized.”

Cody Cocchi, associate director of service-learning at CCGA, said the college’s nursing program incorporates service learning into courses over the span of several semesters.

“They get accepted just before their junior year, and during the first couple projects they’re kind of just getting their feet wet,” Cocchi said. “So the faculty kind of gives them more directives and a lot more guidance ... As they progress they get a lot more autonomy.”



On Friday, this work came to fruition at The Well.



“This is my favorite part about the service-learning projects, is to see it in action,” Cocchi said. “You can talk about it all day long, but the best part is actually seeing it in action.”

Service-learning aims to benefit both the students and the community members being served. The students are able to practice the skills and concepts they’ve learned in the classroom, while the community gets to connect with the students and receive the services they can provide.

“It’s nice because service learning is basically what nurses do every day, as far as getting out and providing education, providing support to the community,” Masano said. “These are senior nursing students, so they’re going to graduate in May. This allows them to put all of the skills that they’ve learned in the program to work.”

