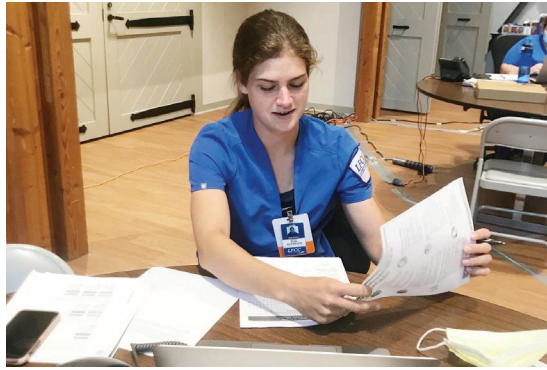


# Nursing students get a lesson in public health

Lord Fairfax Community College students help with contract tracing

By Angela Roberts  
SPECIAL TO THE FAUQUIER TIMES

Teena Stevic, a second-year nursing student at Lord Fairfax Community College, was just days from her start date at the Fauquier Free Clinic when she received word it would not be accepting student volunteers for clinical rotations in light of the novel coronavirus pandemic.



Allison Smith waits to make a call inside the Barn, volunteering as a contact tracer for the Rappahannock Rapidan Health District.

COURTESY PHOTO

But despite the initial disappointment, Stevic still had the opportunity to promote the health and well-being of her neighbors this summer, while earning some of the clinical

hours she needs to graduate next May. She did so from a phone bank inside the Barn at the community college's Fauquier campus, rather

than at a hospital or doctor's office. For nine weeks, Stevic and dozens of her Lord Fairfax classmates worked alongside nursing students at George Mason University to serve as contact tracers for the five counties included in the Rappahannock Rapidan Health District. They juggled calls to residents who had been exposed to people who had tested positive for the virus and provided them with guidance for keeping themselves and their families healthy.

"Positivity and hope and a sense of community is very, very important when you have been diagnosed with a disease such as COVID," Stevic said. "Because of the media and

See **CONTACT TRACE**, page 9

## Coleman Elementary employee tests positive for COVID-19

A Coleman Elementary School staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, a school division representative confirmed Monday. The staffer had returned to work at the school building last week with other school employees.

The *Fauquier Times* received a tip Saturday about the possible case at Coleman and asked the school division for confirmation. In response, Fauquier County Public Schools Public Information Officer Tara Helkowski said administrators had been alerted Thursday to the positive case.

Helkowski said the affected individual has been told to quarantine at home. However, she would not say whether other staff members had been in contact with the individual who tested positive or whether any other individuals had been told to stay home as a result of possible exposure.

As of noon Monday, the Virginia Department of Health had not reported a new outbreak in an educational setting in the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District.

"Marathon Health is working closely with staff members who may have been in contact with the positive individual. Their guidance includes advising individuals about whether to return to work or quarantine," Helkowski said.

Helkowski would not say whether the individual who tested positive for COVID-19 contracted the infection from another staff member. "[The Virginia Department of Health] was notified, and they are conducting the contact tracing."

The case at Coleman comes less than two weeks after three staff members at Bradley Elementary School tested positive for COVID-19. In that situation, employees who work at that school were notified. At least one of the individuals who tested positive was hospitalized, according to the communication staff members received.

## Fauquier reports 1st outbreak in long-term care setting

The Virginia Department of Health has reported a COVID-19 outbreak in progress at the Brookside Rehab & Nursing Center on Hastings Lane in Warrenton; eight cases are associated with that outbreak.

It is the first outbreak in a long-term care setting in Fauquier County, the sixth in the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District. There is also an "outbreak in progress" at the Countryside Assisted Living facility in Madison County; the number of cases there is between one and five. An outbreak at Culpeper Health and Rehab is reporting 25 cases (15 of these cases were reported between Aug. 12 and 14). No deaths have been reported from any of the recent outbreaks in long-term care settings.

The Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District of the Virginia Department of Health reported its first outbreak of COVID-19 in an educational setting on Aug. 6. The outbreak designation came as a result of three confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Bradley Elementary School in Warrenton.

In the health district, there have also been five outbreaks in congregate care settings and one in a health care setting since the beginning of the pandemic. In total, 182 COVID-19 cases have been attributed to the 13 outbreaks in the RRHD.

State-wide, there have been 357 outbreaks in long term care settings (resulting in 8,852 cases and 1,300 deaths), 250 outbreaks in congregate care settings, 51 in correctional facilities, 53 in health care settings, 40 in educational settings.

### New cases of coronavirus

Virginia: 861 Tuesday; 108,282 to date

Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District: 1,053 cases to date

Fauquier: 5 Tuesday; 647 cases to date

Perspective: Between June 8 and July 9, the state's new case numbers were consistently below 700, but a surge in cases in Virginia began to appear July 10, when 943 new cases were

reported. New cases have topped 1,000 12 times since July 15. In Fauquier, in the month of July, 147 new cases were added, as compared to June, when the county added a total of 114 new cases. So far in August, Fauquier has logged 76 new cases.

### Seven-day positivity average (total tests vs. positive tests)

Virginia: 7.0%

RRHD: 4.6% (the lowest it has been since Aug. 3)

Perspective: In Virginia, on June 28, the rate was 5.8%; in the RRHD, the positivity rate was 1.7% on July 1.

### Hospitalizations

Virginia: 8,767

RRHD: 139 (no change from last week)

Fauquier: 35 (no change from last week)

Perspective: Younger adults are becoming ill enough to require acute care. In the health district, 32 people from 50 to 59 have been hospitalized, the largest age group. Twenty-three residents between 40 and 49 were hospitalized, as well as 22 people from the 60- to 69-year-old group. Nineteen who are aged 30 to 39 were hospitalized. Eighteen residents older than 80 years old have been hospitalized. In the state, 1,744 COVID-19 positive residents in the 60 to 69 age group were hospitalized and 1,630 of those aged 50 to 59 were hospitalized. Those were the two age groups with the most hospitalizations.

### Deaths

Virginia: 2,385

RRHD: 27 (no change from last week)

Fauquier: 9 (no change from last week)

Perspective: In the state, the majority of people who have died have been older than 80 (1,170), compared to 1,213 for all residents 79 and younger. Seventeen people older than 70 have died in the health district, while 10 under 70 have died.

## LEGAL NOTICES

### NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPOINT MEMBER TO THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS OF THE TOWN OF WARRENTON

The Council of the Town of Warrenton will consider appointments to fill vacancies to the Board of Zoning Appeals of the Town of Warrenton.

Any qualified residents of the Town who wish to be considered for appointment to the Board of Zoning Appeals can contact Elizabeth Gillie, Town Clerk at **540-347-4505** or by email at **egillie@warrentonva.gov**

The Town of Warrenton does not discriminate on the basis of handicapped status in admission or access to its programs and activities. Town Hall meeting facilities are fully accessible. Any special accommodations can be made upon request 48 hours prior to the meeting.

**Elizabeth A. Gillie**  
Town Clerk

## Fauquier Times

ISSN 1050-7655, USPS 188280  
Published every Wednesday  
by Piedmont Media LLC

### How to reach us

**ADDRESS:**  
41 Culpeper Street  
Warrenton, Virginia 20186

**PHONE:** 540-347-4222  
**FAX:** 540-349-8676  
**HOURS:** 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
weekdays, 24-hour  
answering service

**Publisher**  
Catherine M. Nelson,  
540-347-4222  
cnelson@fauquier.com

**NEWSROOM**  
**Managing Editor, Fauquier**  
Robin Earl, 540-347-4222  
rearl@fauquier.com

**Managing Editor,**  
**Prince William**  
Jill Palermo, 540-351-0431  
jpalermo@fauquier.com

**Web/Copy Editor**  
Amanda Heincer, 540-878-2418  
aheincer@fauquier.com

**Associate Editor**  
John Toler, 540-351-0487  
jtoler@fauquier.com

**Reporter**  
Coy Ferrell, 540-878-2414  
cferrell@fauquier.com

**Sports Editor**  
Peter Brewington, 540-351-1169  
pbrewington@fauquier.com

**ADVERTISING**  
Call 540-347-4222

**Classified Sales Consultant**  
Jeanne Cobert, 540-878-2491  
jcobert@fauquier.com

To place Classified and

Employment ads: Call 540-351-1664 or fax 540-349-8676, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday — Friday or email [fauquierclassifieds@fauquier.com](mailto:fauquierclassifieds@fauquier.com)

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
Call 540-347-4222

Help with your subscription?  
Call 540-878-2413 or email [CirculationFT@fauquier.com](mailto:CirculationFT@fauquier.com)

**Missed your paper?**  
Call 540-347-4222,  
8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Thursdays

Subscription: \$69.68 per year  
within the United States.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address  
changes to: Fauquier Times,  
41 Culpeper St., Warrenton, VA  
20186.

Periodicals postage paid  
at Warrenton, Va. and at  
additional mailing offices

## Lord Fairfax Community College students help with contract tracing

CONTACT TRACE, from page 2

the hype, you're just really scared. In the beginning, it was almost kind of a death sentence, and it's really not."

Planning efforts for the contact tracing operation started back in April, when a George Mason faculty member reached out to Amanda Brooks, the clinical coordinator at Lord Fairfax's Fauquier campus, and connected her with the state's health department. The health department hoped to have its own contact tracing system up and running by August, Brooks said, but needed help in the meantime as the state re-opened.

Besides giving the department time to get organized, the local contact tracing operation also gave nursing students the chance to participate in a crucial public health effort, Brooks said.

"When you take care of somebody in the hospital, you may or may not know anybody who has ever had whatever kind of disease it is," Brooks said. "Where coronavirus, it's affected everybody in one way or another."

To volunteer as a contact tracer, students had to sign up for the Medical Reserve Corps of Virginia — a squadron of volunteers who respond to public health emergencies — and complete several training modules. They were also provided with detailed scripts, walking them through whether to tell a person to isolate or to quarantine.

Volunteers worked for a maximum of three days between June 1 and July 31; they earned up to 24 hours toward their total of 500 hours required to graduate.

Student volunteers also helped connect residents with county resources, should they need help with childcare or getting groceries if they had been told they should quarantine.

Although Stevic has heard stories of contract tracers being yelled at by people skeptical about

the virus or suspicious of their intentions, she said she never experienced anything but kindness during the three days she worked as a volunteer in June. "I had really intelligent conversations with people asking me really good questions," she said.

She especially enjoyed sharing advice with people about ways to care for themselves during quarantine — self-care tips like getting eight hours of sleep and drinking enough water. And, she said, the same tactics she uses to get her seven children to pick up the phone worked well with those who didn't want to answer an unknown phone number.

"I did a trick that I employ as a parent: I call, and you don't answer. I call back, let it ring twice, hang up, call back, and — oh my goodness, you pick up!" she said, with a laugh.

Jennifer Humphries, another second-year nursing student, expressed gratitude for having a role in fighting the pandemic.

"Being able to provide care to individuals who were directly impacted by the coronavirus was a very humbling experience," she said, especially since being a contact tracer allowed her to help Fauquier residents beyond ensuring that they were in compliance with the national mandates.

Over the three days Stevic spent volunteering at The Barn, she estimates she made 30 or more calls. But the work came in waves, she said: "You sit there, and then boom, you're really busy and you're thinking, 'Oh my gosh, I'm never gonna get all this done.' And then, you sit and you wait."

During those slower periods, Brooks said she and an epidemiologist who was stationed at The Barn gave mini-lectures and handed out worksheets reviewing concepts they'd have to know as their studies continued the next semester.

Brooks said she also tried to tell the students each day about how important their efforts were to suppress the spread of the virus. Each call may stop



COURTESY PHOTO

Sarah Williams makes a call inside The Barn while volunteering as a contact tracer.

somebody who had been exposed to the virus from visiting grandma, or a newborn baby or someone else who is vulnerable to the virus, she said.

"People don't realize that it's not about them. Yeah, if you catch it, you're probably going to be fine," she said. "It's not you so much we're worried about — it's the people you might spend time with, that you don't realize are immunocompromised . . . It's time to slow the spread down and hopefully prevent people from getting sick."

*Angela Roberts is a summer intern from the University of Maryland's journalism school. Her internship was made possible by the Piedmont Journalism Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.*

# We're open

with the utmost attention to safety and quality,  
with virtual and in-person appointments,  
with the providers you know and trust,  
with the services and treatments you had to delay,  
with a big welcome back

# for you.

Schedule an in-person or virtual appointment  
at [NovantHealthUVA.org/WelcomeBack](https://www.novanthealthuva.org/WelcomeBack)



The best of health to you