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Local students achieving success in joint RCC/Greensboro College program

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By MARY DOLAN Staff writer

Just three years ago, Rockingham Community College established a partnership with Greensboro College, offering bachelor's degrees to students who enroll in select joint programs. The rewards of the partnership are being reaped by local students, as seven of the 12 academic marshals at Greensboro College's graduation were Rockingham County students.

The joint degree program extends to early childhood education, elementary education and criminal justice.

And in the short lifespan of the program, it has begun to flourish. This year's student marshals – academic standouts who are selected to help with graduation ceremonies – speak highly of the partnership between the schools.

At Greensboro College's May 9 commencement, Rockingham Community College was represented by students who say they're proud to be part of the collaborative program.

Mitsy Porter, chief marshal, recalls receiving the e-mail in April notifying those who had made the grades to make the cut to serve as marshals. She said she was "very excited."

For Porter, a mother of three, enrolling in the school close to home and being able to obtain a four-year education degree as a result was the perfect education solution. She could attend classes at the local school that's "pretty much in your back yard."

Students who enroll in the program are able to take most, if not all, of their courses at RCC. Instructors from Greensboro College come to them.

Enrolling in the RCC/Greensboro College program reflected a decision made to change career paths after two layoffs for Mary Barnes.

"I just took advantage of the opportunity," she said.

Porter and Barnes both brag about the quality of the program, citing energetic and knowledgeable instructors, the ease of attending school close to home and small class sizes.

Barnes calls RCC "probably one of the best assets we have in this county."

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The students also speak to the close-knit nature of the group in the program.

“I think that we have a really good group of people going through this together,” Barnes said.

And so, during Greensboro College’s commencement ceremony earlier this month, the Rockingham County students faithfully ushered people to their seats, delivered caps and gowns and handed out programs.

The seven local marshals were: Mitsy Porter, Wendy Moody, Mary Barnes, Gina Dorsett, Teresa Gibson, Jessica Smith and Chelsea Spencer.

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