

McDOWELL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ORGANIZE BLOOD DRIVE

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Students signed up for the blood drive during lunch on Wednesday.

Marion, NC—Three local students, who plan to dedicate their lives to serving others, are putting on a community blood drive Friday.

McDowell High seniors Rebecca Molina, Hadyn Thynne and Adrienne Hollifield are in Project PROMISE, a program supported by MAHEC that gives students exposure to real healthcare experiences and offers mentorship and internships.

As part of that program, the students create a community project.

“We have to do a certain number of community service hours, and we chose this as our project,” said Hollifield.

The students worked with a mentor from the American Red Cross, Tabitha Bagwell, who helped get the blood drive organized.

“I have worked with them about three months,” Bagwell said. “They have been observing other blood drives, how to operate their own blood drive, how to have a successful blood drive by recruiting donors, and now the last step will be the day of the blood drive. They will run the sign-up table and manage the donors.”

The blood drive will be this Friday from 2-6:30 p.m. at Bojangles’ on North Main Street in Marion.

“They have worked very hard. We are going to make sure it’s very successful,” said Bagwell. “MHS is a huge supporter of the American Red Cross.”

During lunch on Wednesday, the students signed up their classmates to donate. Walk-ins are welcome. The minimum age to donate blood is 16 with parental permission. You must have a photo ID. The process takes about 30 minutes. Donors who participate on Friday will receive a long-sleeved T-shirt.

“The need for blood never stops. We need all types of blood because we are in critical need. There is a special need for O positive and O negative,” said Bagwell. “Summer times and holidays are the hardest times for us to collect.”

Read article on McDowellNews.com.

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The Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) was established in 1974 and is a leader in healthcare, education and innovation. Located in Asheville, MAHEC serves a 16-county region in Western North Carolina. It is the largest Area Health Education Center in North Carolina, which evolved to address national and state concerns with the supply, retention, and quality of health professionals.

MAHEC has launched Project PROMISE workshop programs in Yancey, Mitchell, McDowell, and Madison counties to help boost pipeline efforts to recruit and train more healthcare professionals in rural WNC.

These workshops are a mix of professional development instruction along with hands-on medical activities that were developed by MAHEC staff after meeting with school representatives in all four counties to identify school needs and student interests.

The goal of Project PROMISE is to encourage students to consider pursuing rural healthcare careers and to help them build their resumes and skill sets to be more competitive when applying to medical school. Workshop programming addresses criteria identified as important by the UNC School of Medicine’s Rural Advisory Board.

Plans are in the works to expand the pipeline programs to include Swain County in the Spring 2018 semester and eventually all 16 WNC counties in MAHEC’s service area.

For more information about MAHEC’s rural pipeline programming, please contact Bryan McClure at bryan.mcclure@mahec.net.