

Georgia Leading Edge Award Committee

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to strongly support the Twiggs County Public Schools Leading Edge Award Grant. The Vitamins R and L (Reading and Literacy) Project Grant has been transformational for the students of Twiggs County. It is an honor for Mercer University School of Medicine to partner with this outstanding group of community leaders to effect substantial change in this poor rural county.

De. Keisha Callins, a MUSM faculty member and Ob-Gyn, worked with Dr. Sarah Hawthorne to bring this opportunity to the county and it has been more successful than any imagined. The number of families served has more than doubled and the achievements in reading, literacy and quality education has become a county-wide discussion.

Partners and volunteers have been committed to the continued expansion of this grant and are working to rebuild an infrastructure of quality educational opportunity for all children in this area. Mercer School of Medicine students have had a wonderful opportunity to work toward health literacy with associated families while providing bags of healthy food for participating families.

Thank you for the supporting the community in this meaningful intervention. We are convinced this is a sustainable, effective program and pledge to continue to work with the community, grant leaders and recipients to focus on reading and literacy.

Sincerely,



Jean R. Sumner M.D., F.A.C.P.

Dean

Mercer University School of Medicine

Sumner_jr@mercer.edu