



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Halifax Community College and East Carolina University Formalize Dental Hygiene Articulation Agreement



Dr. Elliott, President/CEO of Halifax Community College, and Dr. Allison Danell, Dean of Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences at ECU.

WELDON, NORTH CAROLINA – Halifax Community College (HCC) and East Carolina University (ECU) formalized a new academic partnership during the ECU–HCC Dental Hygiene Articulation Signing Day held on Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at the Advanced Manufacturing and Corporate Training Center on HCC’s campus.

The event marked a significant step forward in expanding educational pathways for students pursuing careers in dental hygiene and related health sciences fields. The articulation agreement establishes a seamless transfer opportunity for HCC students to continue their education at ECU, strengthening the pipeline of skilled healthcare professionals across the region.

The program opened with welcome remarks from Dr. Levy Brown, Vice President of Academic and Student Success, followed by special partnership remarks from Dr. Allison Danell, Dean of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences at ECU, and Dr. Amy Shannon, Director of University Studies at ECU. Halifax Community College President and CEO, Dr. Patrena Elliott, delivered presidential remarks emphasizing the importance of collaboration in higher education and workforce development.





“This agreement represents a powerful alignment between our academic programs and student success goals,” said Dr. Levy Brown, Vice President of Academic and Student Success. “It creates a clear, structured pathway for our students to continue their education while ensuring they are well prepared to meet the demands of today’s healthcare workforce.”

“This partnership reflects our shared commitment to student success and to meeting the growing demand for qualified healthcare professionals,” said Dr. Patrena Elliott. “By creating clear and accessible pathways, we are empowering our students to advance their education and careers while strengthening the communities we serve.”

The program also featured a student perspective from Shaniya Pernell, a first-year dental hygiene student, and remarks from Ms. Amber Patterson, RDH, a past graduate and current clinical adjunct, highlighting the impact of HCC’s dental hygiene program on student achievement and career readiness.

The official signing of the articulation agreement was conducted by Dr. Elliott and Dr. Danell, symbolizing the partnership between the two institutions.

Lisa J. Santiago, RDH, MSDH, Dental Hygiene Program Director at HCC, emphasized the importance of the agreement for students pursuing long-term career growth.

“This articulation agreement provides our students with expanded opportunities to continue their education beyond the associate degree,” said Santiago. “It strengthens the foundation they build here at HCC and supports their transition into advanced study and leadership roles within the dental hygiene profession.”

Shreail Hinton, Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Management at HCC, highlighted the impact on student access and enrollment pathways.

“Creating clear transfer opportunities like this is essential to helping students see what is possible beyond their starting point,” said Hinton. “This agreement removes barriers and provides a direct route for students to continue their education with confidence.”

Dr. Julie Galvin, Dean of Career and Technical Education and Health Sciences at HCC, noted the broader workforce implications of the partnership.

“Healthcare remains one of the most critical workforce needs in our region,” said Dr. Galvin. “This partnership not only enhances educational opportunities but also helps ensure that our communities have access to highly trained dental hygiene professionals.”

Closing remarks were provided by Lisa J. Santiago, who reaffirmed the program’s commitment to excellence in education and student support.





The ECU–HCC Dental Hygiene Articulation Agreement is designed to provide students with enhanced academic opportunities, streamlined transfer options, and a strong foundation for continued success in the healthcare field.

For more information about Halifax Community College’s Dental Hygiene program and transfer opportunities, please visit halifaxcc.edu.

Halifax Community College’s Mission

Halifax Community College strives to meet the diverse needs of our community by providing high-quality, accessible and affordable education and services for a rapidly changing and globally competitive marketplace.

Media Contact: If you have any questions, please contact Vanessa Council at 252-536-7214 or e-mail vcouncil512@halifaxcc.edu.



Mark Moss, DDS, PhD (East Carolina University), Dr. Elliott (President/ CEO of Halifax Community College), Dr. Allison Danell (Dean, Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences at ECU), Dr. Amy Shannon (Director of University Studies at ECU), Dr. Brown (VP of Academic and Student Success at HCC).





Back Row: Larry Perkins (HCC Board of Trustees), Mark Moss, DDS, PhD (East Carolina University), Dr. Allison Danell (Dean, Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences at ECU), Amber Patterson, RDH (HCC Grad & Current Clinical Adjunct), Veronica Ramirez (HCC Dental Hygiene Student), Dr. Julie Galvin (Dean of CTE and Health Science at HCC), Shreail Hinton (Dean of Admissions and Enrollment Management at HCC), Dr. Brown (VP of Academic and Student Success at HCC); ***Front Row:*** Cormanica Crutchfield (CTE coordinator for Weldon City Schools), Robin Davis (Weldon City Schools), Dr. LaVonne McClain (Executive Director of Secondary Education for Halifax County Schools), Dr. Elliott (President/CEO of HCC), Dr. Amy Shannon (Director of University Studies at ECU), Shaniya Pernell (HCC Dental Hygiene Student), Lisa Santiago (HCC Dental Hygiene Program Director)