



COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING MOTHER AND BABY MERMAIDS

PATHWAY: HEALTH EQUITY

Initiative Description

Mother and Baby Mermaids is an educational initiative where students partner with the OBGYN department at EVMS Norfolk General to help support expecting moms throughout the length of their stay in the Antepartum Unit. The students provide support in the form of companionship and engagement and education about pregnancy to moms who are hospitalized in the Antepartum Unit at Sentara Norfolk General.

Annual Student Activities

- 16 students per cohort
- Students have the opportunity to participate in the Antepartum Visitation Program
- Students form lasting relationships with the moms
- other duties as assigned

Community Outcomes/Results

- ↑ Healthy pregnancies through one-on-one partnerships between at-risk pregnant women and medical students
- ↑ Awareness and access to pregnancy resources
- ↑ Awareness among providers regarding the unique challenges arising during care for patients from underserved communities

Facilitator

Renee C. Morales, MD, FACOG

Partners

- Loving Steps
- Sleep Tight Hampton Roads
- Minus 9 to 5

The Need

- Pregnancy is the gateway to future health of both mother and baby
- Women of lower socioeconomic status experience pregnancy-related complications at a significantly higher rate than those of higher socioeconomic status
- Maternal mortality rates in the U.S. are rising, particularly in marginalized populations (the opposite of trends in other similarly developed countries)