The Jefferson College of Health Sciences and the Virginia Mountain Region of the American Red Cross are partnering on a free event to help children ages 8 to 11 prepare for disasters such as house fires, floods and tornadoes.

The Red Cross created The Pillowcase Project in 2013 to help children in New Orleans prepare for disasters. Several Red Cross chapters across the country have implemented pillowcase projects to teach elementary school students emergency preparedness and coping skills. The program is now sponsored by Disney.

Children will receive tools and information to help their families create emergency communications plans, emergency contact cards, home fire escape plans and a home emergency supplies kit. All of these items can be taken home at the end of the event in a customized pillowcase that the children color and decorate.

Snacks and drinks will be provided.

The Roanoke Valley event will be held May 2 at Jefferson College, 101 Elm Ave. S.E. Registration begins in the third floor lobby at 1 p.m. and the event is scheduled from 2 to 4 p.m.

Jefferson College students in the health sciences program’s “Service Learning in Community Health” class are organizing the project as part of their curriculum.

Register by contacting Paula Poston by April 27 at 520-2299 or paula.poston@redcross.org.

**VWCC foundation honors scholarship benefactors**

The Virginia Western Community College Educational Foundation recently presented its 2015 Community Impact Award to Carolyn Warner and Geoffrey Ottaway in recognition of their establishment of the Michael E. Warner Memorial Endowed Scholarship and the Michael E. Warner Memorial Annual Golf Tournament.

The award recognizes those who give significant philanthropic and community support to perpetuate benefits for the college, its students and the region.

Warner is involved in many community organizations and serves on the membership committee of the Roanoke Women’s Foundation, a philanthropic agency that supports organizations and projects in the Roanoke Valley.

Ottaway is chairman of Checker Leasing Inc., a Roanoke-based owner of Avis and Budget Rent-A-Car.
franchises in several states. He also has served as a director of Valley Financial Corp. and its subsidiary Valley Bank.

Warner’s late husband, Michael Warner, served on boards including St. Andrew’s Catholic Church, Apple Ridge Farms, Virginia Western Community College, the Foundation for Roanoke Valley, Petroleum Marketers Inc., Downtown Roanoke Inc., Center in the Square, Mill Mountain Theatre and Roanoke Catholic School. He also was a director of Valley Financial Corp. and managed his own private investment firm.

The scholarship, established in 2013 with the launch of a $100,000 donation by Ottaway, will provide assistance for tuition, books and other related needs to a full-time student with a minimum 3.0 GPA pursuing a degree in nursing or a certificate in practical nursing.

“The college is indebted to Carolyn and Geoff for their generosity of spirit and their dedicated efforts to serve our community,” said Angela Falconetti, vice president of institutional advancement.

To raise awareness and support for the scholarship fund, Warner and Ottaway created the golf tournament, now in its second year. The inaugural tournament raised more than $27,000. The second annual tournament will be held July 25 at Hunting Hills Country Club.

For more information, contact Carole Tarrant, coordinator of development, at 857-6281 or ctarrant@virginiawestern.edu.

**Cox awards $135,000 in grants for Virginia youth programs**

Cox Communications Virginia recently awarded $135,000 in grants to 15 nonprofit Virginia organizations supporting youth, education and technology programs through its Cox Charities grants program.

Three of the 15 recipients serve the Roanoke Valley.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia received a $10,000 grant for Project Learn, which reinforces academic enrichment and school engagement for 115 youth, ages 6 to 18.

Smart Beginnings Greater Roanoke also received $10,000 grant for its VSQI: Quality Early Care & Education. Smart Beginnings works to ensure that every child in greater Roanoke enters kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed in school.

Greenvale School is using its $10,000 grant for Educational Jump Start, which focuses on providing an on-site mentor, securing educational resources, updating the school library and developing a reading club for students and their families.

“Giving back to the communities where we do business is at the core of our company values and an important part of our operations here at Cox,” said J.D. Myers, senior vice president and region manager for Cox Virginia.

Cox also gave away computers in Roanoke, noting that an estimated 76 percent of K-12 teachers assign
Internet-based homework even though many of their students are in homes without home computers.

In a partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia, Cox provided free computers and discounted access to high-speed Internet services to the first 100 participants who enrolled in its Connect2Compete program.

Connect2Compete is a national nonprofit initiative that aims to extend Internet access to families with children who receive free lunches through the National School Lunch program.