On May 18, members of the Dropout Prevention Coalition joined Hoggard High School students and area Marines for a kayaking expedition. The event was planned as a reward for several students who had worked hard to improve their grades. The outing also served as a mentoring experience, bringing ROTC students together with retired Marines, and giving the students access to positive role models in a fun and informal setting. We had additional children and adults along that also benefited from the experience.

The event was organized by Mike Nelson, undergraduate student from the Watson School of Education. Mike made arrangements with Cissie Brooks who manages the Marine Science program at Wrightsville Beach Elementary. On the day of the event, Cissie expertly led the group, generously volunteering her time on a Saturday and granting us access to the impressive equipment from Wrightsville Beach Elementary. The group enjoyed two hours of kayaking, exploring, and seeing the fauna and flora of the area. Everyone collected specimens and learned about the marine life in the region. The Dropout Prevention Coalition would like to plan additional events where we reward students for succeeding in school, and help them to meet mentors for their future. If you have ideas, or would like to get involved, please contact Claudia Buer at buerbabe1@yahoo.com, or Dr. Janna Robertson at robertsonj@uncw.edu.