

The Agency Supports Persons with Developmental Disabilities in Living,  
Learning, and Working in their Communities

agency for persons with disabilities  
State of Florida



## A Night to Shine

On Friday, February 12, Sunland residents and staff had a wonderful opportunity to participate in the Tim Tebow Foundation's **"Night to Shine."** This event is designed to provide an extraordinary prom night experience for people with special needs. Rivertown Community Church in Marianna served as one of over 200 host churches for this global event which took place simultaneously at participating churches around the world. **Night to Shine** included a red carpet entrance with "paparazzi" snapping photos of the honored guests upon their arrival, hair and makeup beauty stations, shoeshines, thrilling limousine rides, a dance floor, delicious refreshments and much more. As a special touch, guests also received beautiful corsages and boutonnieres, tiaras and crowns.

*Night to Shine is:*

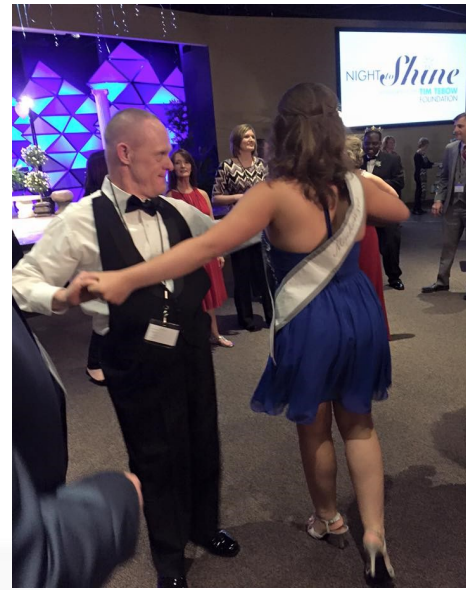
- ◆ *A worldwide movement.*
- ◆ *Changing Valentine's Day weekend from simply a celebration of love, to a celebration of God's love for people with special needs.*
- ◆ *An unforgettable prom night experience.*
- ◆ *A celebration of the value of life.*
- ◆ *A night when all guests are kings and queens of the prom.*

Tebow explains his vision: "When I was 15 years old, I began to realize the importance of fighting for people who can't fight for themselves. As a foundation, we are so passionate about people with special needs, and this event is a great time to tell them how much they are loved by God and by all of us."

Sunland was pleased to support this event to help fulfill the Tim Tebow Foundation's mission to bring Faith, Hope and Love to those needing a brighter day in their darkest hour of need. You can learn more about the Tim Tebow Foundation at [www.timtebowfoundation.org](http://www.timtebowfoundation.org)

Special thanks to Pastor Paul Smith, Rivertown Church Family, Jennie Ann Dean, and a host of Jackson County professionals for lending their time and talent to this phenomenal night!

NIGHT *to Shine*  
SPONSORED BY THE **TIM TEBOW**  
FOUNDATION™



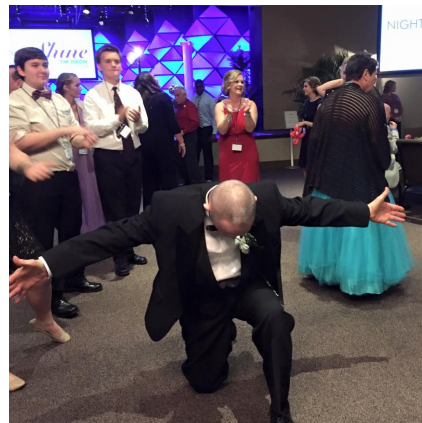
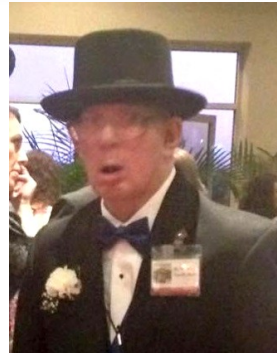
# A Night to Shine







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# A Night to Shine



## SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

### Sunland Center/DDDP Congratulates Director Palmer on Senate Confirmation!

She is golden: It's official! The Florida Senate has confirmed Barbara Palmer as director of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities.

Much appreciation to Sunland Supersonics, who recently won Olympic gold in basketball, Resident Government Council Officers, and Sunland Staff for complementing the Garden Celebration for Director Palmer via Skype. Special thanks to James Godwin, Clint Cox (Voice of Sunland), Maria Johnson, Jennie Ann Dean, Beth Basford and Randall Wynn for expediently conceptualizing the presentation. It was heartfelt, fun, and well received. Thanks to all of Sunland/DDDP staff members for making up this phenomenal team.

Grateful,  
*Geri Williams*  
Superintendent





# Sunland Supersonics Win Gold!



The Jackson County Supersonics basketball team brought home the Gold from the Special Olympics Florida North Region State Basketball Championships. The tournament was held at The Big House in Tavares, Florida with over 500 Special Olympic athletes from the North Region of Florida taking part in the event.

In the semi-finals the Supersonics took on the Flagler County Fury and posted a 46-35 win. In the finals the Supersonics squared off against the Scorpions of Okaloosa County and once again jumped out to an early lead. The Scorpions closed the gap and trailed the Supersonics 21-17 at the half. The Supersonics went up by as many as 12 points in the second half, but the Scorpions deployed a full court press in the fourth quarter. With three minutes to play the Supersonics lead had been cut to 33-30. But in those final three minutes, the Supersonics regained control to finish with a five point victory.

Head Coach of the Supersonics, made up of athletes from Sunland and the Jackson County area, is Chris Murff. Murff is a former standout player from Malone High School and currently works in the Recreation Department at Sunland. Assistant Coaches for the Supersonics are Matt Dryden and Clint Cox. Following the win, Murff and the team received a very nice congratulatory note from State Senator Don Gaetz which reads, in part *"Your accomplishment caught my eye and I wanted to share my congratulations and best wishes. Achievements like yours inspire others and make our community and our state an even better place to live. I'm proud of you and I expect to read more good things about you in the days and years ahead."* Way to go team ~ you make Sunland proud!



**SENATOR DON GAETZ**

*Congratulations!*

*Your accomplishment caught my eye and I wanted to share my congratulations and best wishes.*

*Achievements like yours inspire others and make our community and our state an even better place to live. I'm proud of you and I expect to read more good things about you in the days and years ahead.*

*Thank you for the privilege of representing Northwest Florida in the Senate. And please let me know if there is any way I can ever be of service to you.*

*Sincerely,*

Senator Don Gaetz

Article & Photo Contributed by Clint Cox

## DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS DAY AT THE CAPITOL

On February 18, a delegation of residents and staff from Sunland and DDDP attended the annual Developmental Disabilities Awareness Day at the Capitol. The group was thrilled to have an opportunity to tour the Capitol and meet State Representative Brad Drake and Senator Don Gaetz. Representative Drake was presented with a collaborative art work from the Sunland Art Department which had been framed for display in his office.



Article & Photos Contributed by Jennie Ann Dean

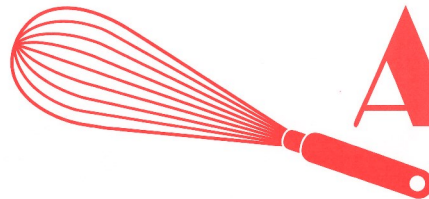
# What's all the Buzz?

Chances are you have seen signs posted around campus advertising “The Hub” and “Culinary Arts” and heard the buzz and speculation over the meaning of the signs. We are excited to announce the upcoming launch of these innovative programs which will offer residents new opportunities to explore the arts and/or develop culinary skills that will position them for greater life opportunities. The two programs will be initiated in early Spring. Great things are coming to Sunland!



*Coming Soon...*

# Culinary Arts





# Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program Direct Care Day Celebration!

The Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program recognized their direct care staff on Friday, February 26, 2016. The appreciation program was held in the Arsenal on Florida State Hospital's campus. The day started out with a breakfast served at 6:30 am for the 3rd shift staff and continued with an 11:00 am lunch for 1st shift and a 5:30 pm dinner for 2nd shift. The breakfast consisted of grits, eggs, sausage, biscuits, fruit, coffee, and juice. The lunch and dinner consisted of fried chicken, yellow rice, green beans, rolls and cupcakes. All staff were thanked for their dedication and tireless efforts of serving the residents in our program and the many sacrifices that they make each day were recognized. Many thanks goes out to the Employee Recognition Committee members for their time and effort in planning and seeing the recognition through. To the many staff that helped with ward coverage during the event, we say thank you for your spirited teamwork. We applaud your selflessness. It makes the difference for staff to enjoy and celebrate this important day!



Article/Photos Contributed by Tony Reed

## SUNLAND SAFETY COMMITTEE

# Get Fit SUNLAND!

The Sunland Safety Committee encourages all employees to join our **Get Fit initiative**. One easy way to begin or supplement your fitness regimen is to do some walking laps before/after work or during your lunch break. Take advantage of the gymnasium or track to get your walk on!

Gym: 22 laps = 1 mile  
Track: 4 laps = 1 mile





# February 2016

## Congratulations to the Following Stars!!

**STAR EMPLOYEES:**

- Unit 1 – Kevin Jones
- Unit 1 – Renee Perry
- Unit 2 – Shanita Lewis
- Unit 2 – Verdica Dixon

**STAR TEAMS:**

**Unit 2 Pierce House**

Shanita Lewis, Verdica Dixon, Callie Boyd, Tianna Thomas, Betsy Newman, Brandi Mills, Carol Clemmons, Carol Brown, Rashonda Quarterman, Dekaylah Jones, Sha'Christmas Lloyd

**Unit 2 Whispering Oaks**

Jasma Black, Vickie Chambliss, Clarence Coleman, Tammie Garrett, Whitney Merritt, Pam McCuen, James Chaney, Barbara Barnes, Shawn Everett, Taneelia Green, Alsyon Staley, Janis Williams, Freddie Staley



**New Employees:**

- Willard "Mitch" Yeomans
- Sheridan Dryden
- Ronterrious Richardson
- Mark Morehead II
- Kineka Weston
- William Nelson
- Deana Smith-Cogland
- Latonya Baker
- Nelson Myrick

**Retirees:**

- Charles Long



Contributed by: Joni Laramore



<https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>

For more information regarding vacancies, deferred compensation or other personnel issues, the Human Resources Department may be reached at 482-9230 or \*04.

In addition, information regarding vacancies can be obtained at the People First website at:

<https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>



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State of Florida

# Project Sunland PRIDE



## Beautification Program!

**P**ERSONAL **R**ESPONSIBILITY **I**N A **D**ESIRABLE **E**NVIRONMENT

### "Community Spotlight of the Month"

## Sunland Chapel



#### **"The Sunland Beacon" - Newsletter Committee**

*Suggestions and/or news article submissions are welcomed; please contact any committee member:*

Beth Basford, Administration - Editor; Clint Cox, CSS/Recreation - Co-Editor; Ashley Hill, CSS/Print Shop; Maria Johnson, CSS/Print Shop; Ethan Smith, IT; Cleve Wedderburn, Unit 1; LaWanda Calhoun, Unit 2; Allison Jones, Unit 3; Juanita Alford, Pathways; Lynn Baxley, Maintenance/Operations; Joni Laramore, Administration; Mary Gallagher, Quality Management; Suzanne Laramore, RN/Nursing-Medical