

The Sunland Beacon

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

agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

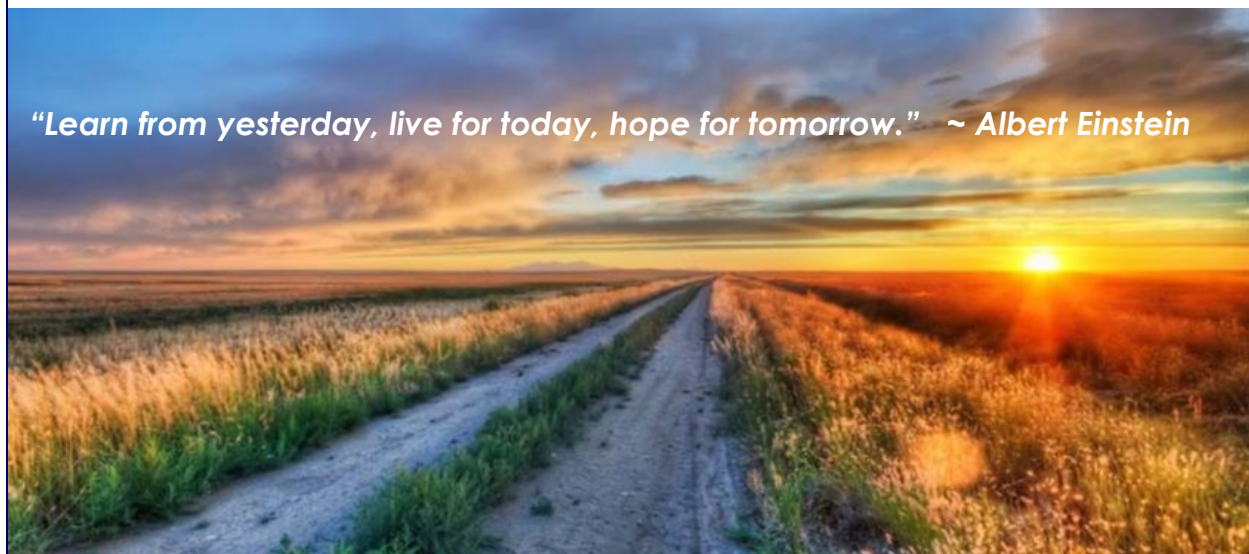


As we begin 2017, we wish to thank all of our valuable employees for the incredible work you do! We value your hard work and dedication to continue providing the highest level of care and services for our residents, the individuals we are privileged to serve.

Looking back over the past year, it is amazing to see all the accomplishments of our employees and our residents. The Beacon has evolved since its inception in 2015, and has become an informative means of communication for our residents, employees, resident families, and others across the state, both within and outside our Agency. It is important that we communicate our news, developments and updates, keeping our readers informed of the great things that are happening at Sunland Center, the Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program, and Rish Park. We are very proud of this newsletter and how it reflects the essence of who we are and those we serve.

Every new year offers new horizons; new opportunities to perform and grow. We look forward to many more success stories to write and new accomplishments to make!

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.” ~ Albert Einstein



Sunland Center - Marianna Campus
Developmental Disabilities Center
3700 Williams Drive, Marianna, FL 32446


agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

Sunland Center - Chattahoochee Campus
Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program
100 N. Main Street, Chattahoochee, FL 32324

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is:

‘What are
YOU DOING
FOR OTHERS?’”

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Life's most persistent and urgent question is, "What are you doing for others?"
 Martin Luther King, Jr.

Jackson County's Chamber of Commerce continues to gift our community with dynamic and inspiring speakers. This year's 89th Annual Banquet was no exception. The speaker was Quint Studer. While you may not be familiar with his name, you will appreciate his response to Dr. King's question: "What are you doing for others?" His life's work speaks volumes to his commitment to serve his community and beyond. Just to give you a bit of background on Mr. Studer, as described in his introduction, he is touted as a "businessman, visionary, entrepreneur, and mentor."

During his talk at the banquet, it was clear that he has a heart for children and especially those whose needs cannot be met in a usual and customary fashion. Immediately, I connected with him and I wanted to hear everything he had to say. Studer moved easily on the stage connecting with his audience as he talked about charitable work in his community, successes in business, contribution of time and talent in the Health Care Industry, Economic Development, and sentinel work in the area of early brain development. Driving home the point of early exposure and connectedness to words to literacy to improved quality of life throughout the life span.

With such humility and grace, this co-owner of the Pensacola Blue Wahoos Minor League Baseball Team, Founder (together with his wife Rishy) of the Studer Community Institute, and accomplished businessman created space and time to share with us the urgency of giving back and progressively moving forward. Studer punctuated the evening with a warm smile, well timed humor, and solid message. Sunland representatives will be taking this message back to the team. Thanks Deputy Superintendent Reed, Resident Advocate Dean, Division Director Ward, and Division Director Thorn, PsyD.

Team (Sunland, DDDP, Rish) how are we answering the question: "What are we doing for others?" I invite you to share your stories with the Beacon staff. No doubt, many are serving well.

Geri Williams
 Superintendent

A Time To Dance

Madison Smith Owner/Instructor

"Dance is the hidden language of the soul of the body." ~ Martha Graham

Sunland is pleased to offer dance classes by Madison Smith, owner and instructor from "A Time to Dance" studio. A total of 16 residents signed up for the classes and will be meeting twice monthly at the Mixer. The first class, held on January 20, was a tremendous success. Residents learned progressive basic dance techniques, which they were able to put together in a dance by end of class.

Joining the dance class students were several staff who showed off some dance moves of their own!



*Dance is a conversation
between body & soul.*

CULINARY ARTS *The* MIXER GRADUATION

The Culinary Arts Program celebrated their first graduating class on Wednesday, January 18, at the Culinary Mixer. Three students were presented certificates of completion during the ceremony. The program began with an invocation by Chaplain Ruthie Moore, followed with a welcome by program instructor Wayne Winkle, and words of appreciation by Michele B., a student of the program. James Godwin, Director of Centralized Support Services introduced distinguished guests and the keynote speaker, Tim Baggett, Administrator at the Jackson County School at Sunland. Mr. Baggett commended the students for their hard work and determination which has earned them the status of being the first graduates of the culinary program. Students were reminded of the important roles education and training provide toward the achievement of life goals. Following Mr. Baggett's address to the graduates, Superintendent Williams presented framed certificates of completion and congratulated the students on their achievements, wishing them well in future endeavors. After the formalities, honorees and guests were treated to a reception and time of fellowship.

Congratulations to Steven G., Michele B., and Dwayne B. on your successful completion of the Culinary Arts Program!



Pictured L-R: Steven G., Wayne Winkle, Michele B., Dwayne B., Lori Burke and James Godwin

Unit 1 Activities

As always, Unit 1 is abuzz with lots of exciting activities. To celebrate 2017, the staff of Harrison House provided the gentlemen who reside there with a New Year's party. A delicious meal of hamburgers with all the trimmings, along with ice cream, completed the meal.

Unit 1 Behavior Services welcomes two new employees, Ms. Jocelyn Kirby and Ms. Melody Powe. We are happy to have these ladies join our team!



Congratulations to Ms. Shirley Spires who is retiring after serving 28 years with the State of Florida. The staff and residents of Unit 1 will certainly miss Ms. Spires, but wish her well in this exciting new season of life!



Unit 1 Administration celebrates our staff who have January birthdays!



- January 1
- January 2
- January 6
- January 12
- January 14
- January 15
- January 17
- January 18
- January 21
- January 26
- January 29
- January 31

- Renee Perry
- Lucretia Harlow
- Shawnada Garrett
- Derrick Thrash
- Xavier King
- Acenia Dickens
- Britney Altland
- Eunice Henderson
- Kineka Weston
- LaToya Baker
- James Dallas
- Vickie Curry

Contributed by: Renee Perry

Unit 2 on the Move...

Unit 2 Resident Government, under the direction of Voncille Williams, has been busy! Recently, 13 residents participated in a field trip to the popular "Dave & Buster's" at Pier Park in Panama City Beach where they ate and spent the afternoon making memories, engaging in video games, and dancing. Their faces lit up with pure joy while engaged in the many gaming opportunities as they were able to win some really nice quality prizes. The food was wonderful and the staff very accommodating to our group. It was great day to be out and about in the community!



Contributed by: Tambra Cabrera



SUNSHINE SHOOTOUT

The 2017 Sunshine Shootout, held on January 25, boasted a great turnout and a lot of participation. To kick-off the event, Ronald K. of Unit 1 sang the National Anthem. Within the competition, there were three levels with each level being made up of three different basketball drills, all commensurate with the respective skill level. In all, a total of 58 residents took part in the event, with representatives from all three Units and Pathways. Thanks to all who came out to support the event and those who had a hand in conducting the event. Congratulations to the following winners:

Level I	1st Place	Johnnie Mae W., Tim B., Cedric M.
	2nd Place	Dan H., Eddie T.
	3rd Place	Gus F.
Level II	1st Place	Orlando S.
	2nd Place	Cheryl D., Jeffery E.
	3rd Place	Samuel L.
Level III	1st Place	Arnaldo M.
	2nd Place	Elijah B.
	3rd Place	Jacob R.



Contributed by: Clint Cox



Jackson County School at Sunland

Congratulations to Brenda Gibson, teacher of the month, and Charisse Grey, paraprofessional of the month! Both are exceptional employees that help make the Jackson County School at Sunland school what it is.

Ms. Gibson has been instrumental in starting a new functional goals program this year. Students enrolled in this program have made tremendous gains. Ms. Grey continues to work with 13 wonderful students in Mr. Burke's class. When she's not busy there you can find her singing and playing the piano for a number of Sunland events.



Ms. Brenda Gibson works with students on functional goals.



Ms. Charisse Grey shares her musical talents!



Ms. Brenda Gibson



Ms. Charisse Grey

Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program

During the month of December, the Psychology Services Department held mock trials with resident participation. The Trial Competency instructors did an outstanding job scheduling, coordinating and facilitating the mock trials as well as the preparation and ordering of food after their conclusion. With the Instructors assisting them, the residents we serve were engaged in their respective roles. This made for an enjoyable and educational event for all involved in the mock trials, including spectators. Trial Competency Supervisor Gary Gibson would like to recognize this group for outstanding teamwork, and doing their part in making DDDP an outstanding program. Great Job team!

Pictured from left to right: Tallulah Thomas, Peggy Green, John Foster, Danielle Shaw, Heather Carnley.



Article & Photos Contributed by: Corey Chafin

Announcing! Olympic Medal Star Awards!



The Sunland Employee Recognition Program is pleased to announce the new structure of the Star Award Program. The new format will be reflective of the Olympic games, affording employees opportunities to win Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal Star Awards, based on their merited job performance. We all know the Olympics are epic - but they are more than stunning finishes and medals. They are the ultimate representation of lived experiences, complete with triumph, celebration and of course, recognition. The same can be said for employee experiences.

If there is a lesson to be learned from the Olympic games, it is that a key motivator for high performance is *recognition*. Olympic athletes represent the highest performers in their sports, and their performances are driven by many factors. If you think about it, employees are not that different from athletes. Like Olympic athletes, high performing employees are also driven by many factors, and one of them is positive recognition.

The Employee Recognition Program encourages employees to cheer on their co-workers for their successes. The Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal for a high performer in direct care may represent a very unique achievement, something different from a Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal for a nurse, maintenance worker or vocational training staff, yet all are well-earned and deserving of recognition. An important lesson to be remembered and learned from the Olympics is that each of us have aspirations; those aspirations are important and should drive us to excel for our organization every day. Every medal that is won is not only for the individual, but also for the team.

So, you may ask "What will the new Sunland Employee Recognition program look like?" Awards will continue to be presented during the last Leadership Meeting of each month and award recipients will continue to be recognized in the Beacon. A leaderboard will be posted at the Suntown Mall, tracking departmental standings over the course of the year. At year-end, the department with the highest percentage of medals to staff ratio will be the winning department. The program is competitive, and encourages continuous high level performance of job duties, with the ultimate goal of providing the highest level of care for those we are privileged to serve. Along with bragging rights, a reward such as a reception or cook-out, will be hosted for the winning department! *Let the games begin!*

Congratulations January Olympic Medal Star Award Winners!

Gold Medal Star Award - Unit 2 Team: Thiel Center

Gold Medal Star Award - CSS Team: Print Shop

Silver Medal Star Award - Johnny Hodges, CSS/Recreation

Bronze Medal Star Award - Bo Hughes, CSS/Recreation



Sunland Center
Olympic Medal Star Awards

ATTENTION PLEASE!

When reporting works comp claims, it is essential that the correct information be given. Sunland's location code is 7153 for Civil and Pathways is 7154. Correct forms are located on SharePoint in the Forms folder, HR forms, Workers Comp folder.

Please ensure this version of the forms is being used and disregard any previous forms.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Amanda Johnson, HR Manager and her staff, Veronica Mullinax, Lizzie Holland, Nicole Sims and Regina Decker are always happy to serve you!

For more information regarding career opportunities, deferred compensation, retirement or other personnel issues, the Human Resources Department can be reached at 482-9230 or *04.

Information regarding vacancies can be obtained at the People First website at:

<https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>



NEW EMPLOYEES



- Shaliyaah Griffin
- Kiana Laster
- Paul Dunne
- Michelle Shurum
- Dylan Ammons
- Lavasyette Donaldson
- Kayla Brock
- Jocelyn Kirby
- Tyquandria Harris
- Angela Stratton
- Terry Vicks
- Kacie Farlin

Retirees

- Mazie Mount
- Marcia Sanders
- Jimmy Jones
- Shirley Spires





agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

Project Sunland PRIDE



Beautification Program!

PERSONAL **R**ESPONSIBILITY **I**N A **D**ESIRABLE **E**NVIRONMENT

"Community Spotlight of the Month"



Unit 3/East Washington



"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; Ethan Smith, IT; Renee Perry, Unit 1; LaWanda Calhoun, Unit 2; Allison Jones, Unit 3; Juanita Alford, Pathways; Joni Laramore, Administration; Mary Gallagher, Quality Management; Suzanne Laramore, RN/Nursing-Medical