

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

agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida



Sunland's 2nd Annual "Art in the Park" Huge Success!

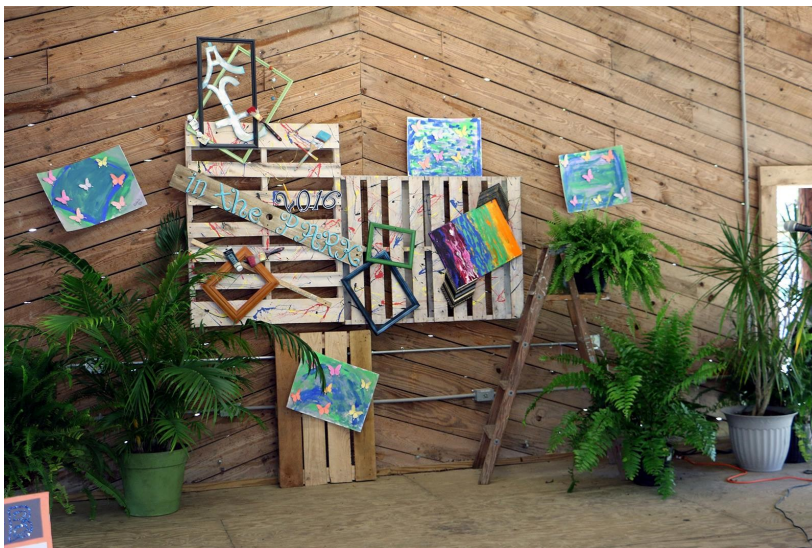
Sunland Center's 'Annual Art in the Park' Art Show was held Saturday, May 7th and was a huge success! The show featured the works of local artists in our surrounding communities, residents from Sunland Center and the Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program in Chattahoochee; and inmates from FCI, Marianna.

The show has grown significantly since its inception in 2015 in size and popularity, and most importantly, in the quality of the submissions. It has built a reputation for its varied sampling of local talent at its finest. Visitors perused original artwork; various mediums were represented including paintings, photography, sculpture, wood, and fiber. Attendees were treated to over 275 works of art. The show was held in the beautiful Environmental Park at Sunland.

"We are so grateful to the community for visiting Art in the Park and supporting the work of our residents," stated Event Chair Maria Johnson. Next year's event will take place Saturday, May 6th.

Sunland's newly formed 'Hub' provides art classes for residents wishing to participate in the art show. The Hub Art Center is committed to promoting visual art experiences and enriching the lives of the individuals that we are privileged to serve. The Culinary Mixer, under the direction of Instructor Wayne Winkle, treated attendees of the Artists' Reception to a variety of delicious brunch items served by residents enrolled in the program.

A special thanks to Event Coordinators Maria Johnson and Jennie Ann Dean for a job well done!



2016 Art in the Park



2016 Staff Appreciation Week

Sunland celebrated Staff Appreciation Week in grand style with a variety of fun-filled activities. This annual celebration is designed to show appreciation to our dedicated and hard-working staff! This year, staff participated in "theme" days to include Team Spirit Day on Monday, which gave everyone an opportunity to show off their team spirit by wearing their preferred team apparel. "Favorite Era Day" was the theme for Tuesday and was a big hit with staff! Those participating definitely showcased a few "throw backs" from days gone by! Wednesday was Sunland Spirit Day where staff donned Sunland's colors "Blue & Gold," or their favorite Sunland tee shirt. It was an exciting change of pace to see the interesting outfits this year!



Employees also enjoyed opportunities to participate in a variety of sports activities to include the annual Horseshoe Tournament, Basketball Shootout, Tug of War and a new favorite now in its second year, the annual Staff Volleyball Tournament. Congratulations to Team Pathways, proud defenders of Tug of War and the volleyball tournament! Clint Cox, Recreation Director stated "everyone seemed to have a great time and most importantly, there were no injuries to report .

The celebration culminated on Wednesday with a delicious meal for everyone. Our 3rd shift employees were treated to a scrumptious country style breakfast at the new Culinary Mixer, and a delicious BBQ cookout was hosted for 1st & 2nd shift at the Environmental Park.

The annual Bake Off was a great hit once again this year, with a number of delectable treats for the judges to sample. Congratulations are in order to the following winners: Overall \$50 Grand Prize Allison Staley-Whispering Oaks took home the Grand Prize for her Chocolate Chip, Pecan, Cherry cookies. Other division winners were: Cake Division: Grand Prize Trophy-Pauline Robinson-Pineapple Coconut Cake; 1st Place Ribbon-Randall Wynn-Lemon Pound Cake; 2nd Place Ribbon-Allison Staley-Almond Joy Cake; and 3rd Place Ribbon-Jimmy Miller-Mississippi Mud Cake. In the Cookie Division winners were: Grand Prize Trophy-Allison Staley-Chocolate chip pecan cherry cookies; 1st Place Ribbon-Pam Mayo-Mississippi Mud Bars; 2nd Place Ribbon-Pauline Robinson-Mississippi Mud Bars; 3rd Place Ribbon-Diane Miller-Chocolate Chip Snack Bars. Rounding out the desserts in the Pie Division, the Grand Prize Trophy was awarded to Racquel Dunston for her Spring Pie.

Congratulations and a huge shout out to Centralized Support Services who captured the "Spirit of Sunland" traveling trophy!! CSS rose to the top of the field while vying for the coveted award by exhibiting the highest percentage of staff participation in the team spirit activities and their ongoing support of the Star Employee Recognition Program during the past year! Way to go Team CSS!



Staff Appreciation Week 2016



3rd Shift Breakfast



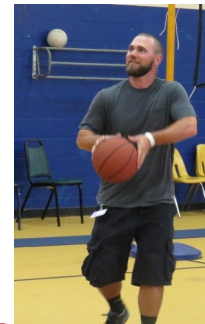
Bake Off Contest



BBQ PICNIC



Sports Activity Days!



Team Spirit Days!



Sunland Honors Nurses for their Service!

On behalf of the Sunland Nursing Department, we would like to say, "Thank you to all who contributed to making Nurse's Week special for us!" The recognition that was received greatly impacted us! Whether you sent an email or told us happy Nurse's Week in person or contributed to our celebration, your good wishes meant a lot to us. More than one nurse was heard to say that they really felt appreciated more than ever! We all agreed the best part of the week was the well wishes we heard from everyone as we went about working.

We started off Nurse's Week with Ice Cream Cones on Friday. Monday, the nurses were served a continental breakfast including donut holes, scones, a variety of Danishes and juice. Taco Tuesday was a big hit; especially Randall Wynn's pound cake! (Thanks again Randall!!) Wednesday was game day with our own version of Sunland Bingo and Nursing Trivia. Prizes were awarded to the winners. Thursday, the nurses were treated to gourmet s'mores and gift bags as well as drawings for gifts.

And just when we thought it was over, Units 1 & 3 Administration and staff sent the nurses huge gift baskets full of goodies. Plus, our Medical Director and providers bought us pizza! By the end of the week we were feeling stuffed and loved!

Again, thank you to everyone! Sunland is a great place to work!



RESIDENTS PARTICIPATE IN Mock Election

Hats Off to Jackson County Assistant Supervisor of Elections, Vicki Farris and Scott Gosnell, Deputy Supervisor & Equipment Manager for going above and beyond to provide Sunland residents with a comprehensive educational opportunity regarding the voting and the electoral process. An informational PowerPoint, followed by a mock election gave participating residents a "hands-on" opportunity to learn how ballots are structured, how to cast a vote for their candidate of choice and how to submit the ballot upon completion.

In collaboration with the Resident Government at Sunland, staff from the Supervisor of Elections worked to ensure residents were well informed. Education about the importance of voting and how it enables a person to have a voice on issues that impact their lives lays the foundation for a responsible future voter. The goal of this training event was to educate residents about the voting process, their democratic right to vote and create informed future voters. Ms. Farris stated "We did a mock election-secret ballot so the residents know that voting is their choice and who they vote for is their choice." She went on to explain, "we discussed the difference between fact and opinion with information geared toward their skill levels and that one person's vote can make a difference."

After the participants fed their ballots into the voting machine, the votes were tabulated and Mrs. Farris gave the results of the election to all who attended. As a reminder of the importance of casting their vote, residents were provided with an American flag, pens, pencils and an activity book.

Sunland appreciates the Office of the Jackson County Supervisor of Elections for creating an important training opportunity that will positively affect the lives of the individuals we serve.



Article & Photos Contributed by : Jennie Ann Dean

Sunland Residents Excel at Special Olympic Summer Games

The Sunland contingency of the Jackson County Special Olympics returned from the 2016 State Summer Games at Disney's Wide World of Sports in Kissimmee with a bevy of medals. Everyone can be proud of how the athletes represented Sunland and Jackson County. Here is a breakdown of the results:

Volleyball Team (Sonics) won Gold – beat Pinellas County Huskies for the Gold – lost the opening match 3 sets to 2 on Friday; came back Saturday morning and beat the Huskies 3 sets to 0; In the deciding match Saturday afternoon the Sonics took a 3-1 win. The Sonics Volleyball team was comprised of five players from Sunland (Roosevelt E., Eddie M., John B., Jesse D., Dwane B.) and two players from the community (Tony & Franciose P.).

Cycling – There were a total of five cyclist (4 from Sunland and 1 from the community) that made the trip and all five cyclist won medals. Three won gold medals (David R., Charles V. from Sunland and Nathan T. from the community;) Floyd N. won a Silver medal and Jeffery E. won a Bronze medal.

Track – There were a total of three athletes that made the trip. Michelle B. won a Gold medal in the 100 meter dash; the other two athletes (Ronny B. and James R.) gave a valiant effort and competed with spirit and enthusiasm.

In all, of the 15 individuals that went on the trip, 11 won a Gold medal and two more won a Silver and Bronze; that's 87% of our individuals earning a medal! It was also the first trip to Summer Games for four athletes (Jeffery E., Ronny B., James R., Dwane B.) and it is always special to see their reactions to the great job that Special Olympics Florida and Disney World do with these games.

On a somewhat sad note, after more than 20 years of taking Sunland residents on more Special Olympic trips that any of us can count, Chuck Dickson is retiring May 31st. This was his final trip as a Sunland employee. It will be hard to replace Chuck's experience and easy going temperament and he will certainly be missed. Good Luck Chuck !



SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

I like to think that the Sunland Beacon is a living thing, growing, advancing, and enriching the lives of its readers. It was just slightly over a year ago that I wrote these words: "I trust you will enjoy The Sunland Beacon and find it to be an informative and relevant communication tool (March 2015)."

Flipping through the pages of the March 2015 issue to now you will see that our commitment to share information is being realized on the pages of each new publication. Pictures speak thousands of words and I am sure conversations are enhanced by personal narrations. Imagine hearing: "Look at the smile on Joe's face. He was having a great day!" "Did you see all the residents showing off their art to the visitors?" "Cliff has a big smile when seeing his mom" "Wow! Cheryl did a great job serving!" "Tanessa and Sharonda were excellent greeters and served up tea with big bright smiles at The Culinary Mixer!" "Jeremy and Cat enjoy bike riding." "Aaron loves music." "Tommy enjoys mom and dad!" "Moses gives Maria and Jennie a warm hello." "Robert and Eddie love their jobs!" And, so on... . Articles are informative and relevant. Our many contributors: residents, staff, family members, and others give of themselves to uplift and encourage our spirits in words and pictures; always serving as a poignant reminder of basic human truths: Meaning and purpose; and how we communicate our truths. We enjoy telling and hearing our stories.

Some folks say our brains are wired for stories. Most of us remember stories far better than we remember facts and statistics. Ira Glass explains it this way, "The power of anecdote is so great that it has a momentum in and of itself; with a well-told story you feel as if you are on a train that has a destination." Think about it: How many times do we say, "I see where you're going with that..." and we enjoy the ride on the listening tour. Ms. Toolie Harkins and friends were quite the oral history conductors at Sunland's 2nd Annual Art in the Park Celebration. What a fabulous time with these beautiful ladies! We enjoyed their presence and conversations. Speaking of conversations, Sunland recently had the privilege to roundtable and tour Criminal Justice Workgroup Members: Sheryl Soukup, Dr. Jean Sherman, Kathy Leigh, and Dick Bradley along with Forensic Champion Tina Weber. What a great opportunity to learn from these seasoned professionals who give unselfishly of themselves to aid in advancing this important work. It was great tapping into this brain trust. Lots of wisdom and great experiences. The Sunland Team was grateful for the information sharing.

Effective storytelling in pieces like the Beacon and in oral conversations are best received when they encourage, inspire, uplift, humor, and celebrate. That is our goal with this important piece of journalism. We want it to be compelling, thought provoking, funny, engaging and heart pounding. Success stories that defy limits placed on individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or stories that join hearts and minds for a cause, or a rallying call for a purposeful event connects us in our humanity. We want to bring these stories to you wherever you are so that you can feel connected to the Beacon and look forward to seeing pictures of happy, productive people while reading new and exciting articles.

Enjoy this month's edition! We are still growing!



Grateful,

Geri Williams
Superintendent

ARCHITECTS OF TOMORROW



Sunland and DDDP were well represented at the 2016 Leadercast event, hosted by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce. The theme, "Architects of Tomorrow" focused on what it means to be a visionary leader.

Participants were afforded great inspiration and insight from a line up of distinguished leaders to include: Andy Stanley, Leadership Author & Communicator; Nick Saban, Head Football Coach of The University of Alabama; Dr. Henry Cloud, Leadership Expert, Psychologist & Author; James Brown, Network Broadcaster, CBS Sports & News; Rorke Denver, Navy SEAL Commander & Author; Kat Cole, Group President of FOCUS Brands; Steve Wozniak, Co-Founder of Apple; Chris Barez-Brown, Author & Creativity Guru and Tripp Crosby, Comedian, Director & Host of Leadercast 2016

Visionary leaders have the ability to see a preferred future, operate in the present, and utilize the resources around them to architect a clear path to a new destination. They work tirelessly to empower those around them to bring a vision to life.

Architects of Tomorrow imagine a future that is rich and full of hope. A future where problems are solved, questions are answered, confusion gives way to clarity.

In it's simplest form, leadership looks like creating and casting a compelling vision and mobilizing individuals to fulfill that vision. That is the role of the Architect... they design the path, they communicate the directions clearly, and they lead their team towards that preferred future with little deviation.

Today is better because of the visionary leaders of yesterday, and the future will be brighter because of the Architects of Tomorrow.



"Leadercast exists to positively change the way the world thinks about leadership."

"Leadercast was built on a belief that the world needs better leaders in business, organizations, communities, and homes — Leaders Worth Following."



Unit 2 on the Move...



Cameras snapped, families and friends grinned and sighed as they all gathered to watch the Bainbridge State College commencement ceremony held on April 30, 2016. Graduates were congratulated for their achievements on this memorable day. Many of the students receiving their diploma worked hard to earn it, especially Sunland's own Linda Edwards. Ms. Edwards completed her Medical Administrative Technology degree while working a full time job at Sunland. Residents of Woodridge House were thrilled to be there to support Ms. Edwards. It was a first for many of the ladies as they enjoyed the pomp and circumstance of Ms. Edwards' graduation day! They were able to cheer from the audience as they watched Edwards receive her diploma, graduating with honors as well as being a member of Alpha Beta Gamma Honor Society Member! Kuddo's to Staff Linda Edwards! Unit 2 and the ladies of Woodridge House are so proud of you!



2016 Relay for Life



Cancer does not discriminate. It affects the young, the old, the healthy. The only way to fight the disease, advocates say, is with the support of one another. This is why residents of Woodridge House joined in the Relay for Life on Friday, May 6 at Citizen's Lodge; they have their own survivor!

Staff Lawanda Calhoun, Verdie Dixon and the ladies from Woodridge enjoyed participating in the survivors dinner followed by the survivor's walk. The emotional survivors lap was especially meaningful to them as their friend and housemate, Ms. Ruby P. is a survivor! The sidelines of the walking track were full of many onlookers with tears in their eyes. Their applause and cheers echoed as cancer survivors began the first lap, known as the "celebratory lap" of the relay. "Everybody here is in a community, we come here to celebrate" said Lawanda Calhoun as she watched resident Ruby P. and staff Verdie Dixon walk hand in hand along with others taking laps. By the end everyone was reminded what they were there for: to hold on to their loved ones, to hold on to their memories of those who have passed, and to encourage and inspire others along their journey.



Articles & Photos Contributed by :Lawanda Calhoun

Chaplaincy Services



Faith Used in Everyday Living

Centralized Support Services / Chaplaincy Services recently initiated a new program, geared toward the interests residents had voiced. The concept of the program quickly took off and so began the launch of "Faith Used in Everyday Living" otherwise referred to as FUEL.

Chaplain Ruthie Moore, coordinator of the new program is thrilled with the emerging ideas participants have suggested. She stated "During our very first meeting we asked those in attendance a question... *"Is there anything that you have not done that you would like to do?"* We were amazed at their answers. Our residents want to reach out to others right here at Sunland as well as in the local community. They shared that they would like to visit the residents in Unit 3 and the Theil Center, as well as people in the nursing homes in the community. We started out by visiting Unit 3 and Thiel Center on May 24th. We will be calling to arrange these visits as we surely want this to be a very successful time for our FUEL attendees and those we visit."

A special thank you for your help in making these activities positive and meaningful experiences for our residents Chaplain Ruthie!



Contributed by: Clint Cox

Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program DDDP Family Day 2016

DDDP celebrated "Family Day 2016" on May 14, with a total of 125 family members in attendance. For the occasion, the East and West buildings were festively decorated for this year's "Mardi Gras" theme. The day consisted of many activities that residents and their family members participated in, to include a delicious lunch.

Many of the families offered positive comments to include "this is great that you all are doing this for the residents" and "the decorations for this event were great." Families also had the opportunity to meet with Recovery Team members and ask questions about their loved ones and their progress.

This event was truly a great success and many thanks go out to the staff that volunteered to assist in planning, preparing, and coordinating Family Day 2016.



Celebrate
Family
Day!



Article & Photos Contributed by: Tony Reed

Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program



DDDP Residents Participate in "Art in the Park"

On May 12, DDDP residents enrolled in the Sunland Art Program hosted an "Art in the Park" event for the staff and residents of DDDP. Residents had the opportunity to enjoy refreshments while speaking about the art program and how they benefited from their participation. Resident art work was displayed for all to see the variety of fine work produced by the participants.

The Art Program has certainly instilled a strong sense of pride and accomplishment in the lives of each of the participants. DDDP would like to extend a huge "thank you" to Jennie Ann Dean and Maria Johnson for their dedication and commitment to the program and for the extension to DDDP!



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DDDP



Article & Photos Contributed by: Tony Reed

Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program DDDP Celebrates Nurse's Week

The 2016 National Nurses Week theme was "Culture of Safety, It Starts with You." DDDP took the opportunity to use National Nurses Week to show our appreciation for the dedication and service provided by the nursing staff at DDDP to our residents. Nurse's week was kicked off on May 6th with banners posted on the entry doors for all to see and remind staff to show their appreciation to our nurses. Nurses were treated to baskets filled with chocolate treats, and for the health conscious, a variety of apples and oranges. Baskets were kept full and over flowing for all shifts through Wednesday. The week was topped off in royal fashion, with nurses being honored to a feast at the small chapel which included prime rib, mashed potatoes, green beans, and deserts. All nurses received Certificates of Appreciation from Administration and thank you cards from Nursing Administration. Special recognition goes to Lori Keel, Tammy Cloud, Christina Elliott, and Paul Mazzotta. Their contributions and assistance during this week of celebration is greatly appreciated!



Front Row, L to R: Mike Baugher, RNS; Lori Peel, RNS; Vanessa Perkins, RNS; Bonni Hall, RNS

Middle Row: Michelle Baird, RNS

Back Row: Richard Cook, END; Carlos Ardila, RNS; Charlotte Cowherd, SLPN; Nick Byrd, SLPN; Doris Speights, RNS; Terri Hatton, RNS; Stephanie Sikes, SLPN; Larry Johnson, RNS.

Not Pictured: Brian Eldridge, SRNS; Gloria Grooms, RNS; Bedford Jones, RNS; Julie Kressman, RNS; Brenda Lawson, RNS; James Poole, RNS; Jackie Raines, SLPN; Jessi Smith, RNS; Marlon Williams, RNS

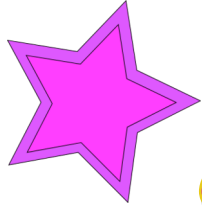
DDDP Star Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Debra Cone, Personnel Services Specialist, who has been named DDDP's May 2016 Star Employee of the Month! Ms. Cone demonstrates a commitment to her job and the mission of DDDP in her dedication to assisting employees. She routinely comes in early and stays late to meet with employees from alternate shifts. Ms. Cone is professional in her interactions with everyone she works with and is very knowledgeable in Human Resources. Customers have quoted that she is "courteous, friendly, helpful, and a team player."

Ms. Cone is considered an asset to DDDP and we congratulate her on this recognition!



Article/Photos Contributed by: Richard Cook and Tony Reed



May 2016 awards

Congratulations! Star Employees

Hawlen Ebanks

Pathways

Michelle Wynn

Pathways

Suzanne Laramore

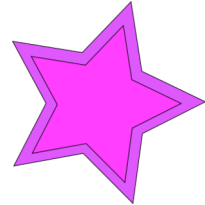
Nursing

Karyn Bielski

Nursing

Jacqui Hilton

Nursing



NEW EMPLOYEES

Rhonda Page
Jason Sims
Vicky Rodgers
Laura Roedel
James Bailey
Bowen Hughes

HAPPY RETIREMENT RETIREES

Brenda (Gail) Tipton
Deborah Barrett
Bruce Gambill
Carrie Tripp
Mango Davis

Charles Dickson Jr
Joyce McKinnie
Lynn Baxley
Juanita Register
Ruthie Owens

Contributed by: Joni Laramore

HUMAN RESOURCES

WE'RE HIRING!

Come join our team.

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>



agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

Project Sunland PRIDE

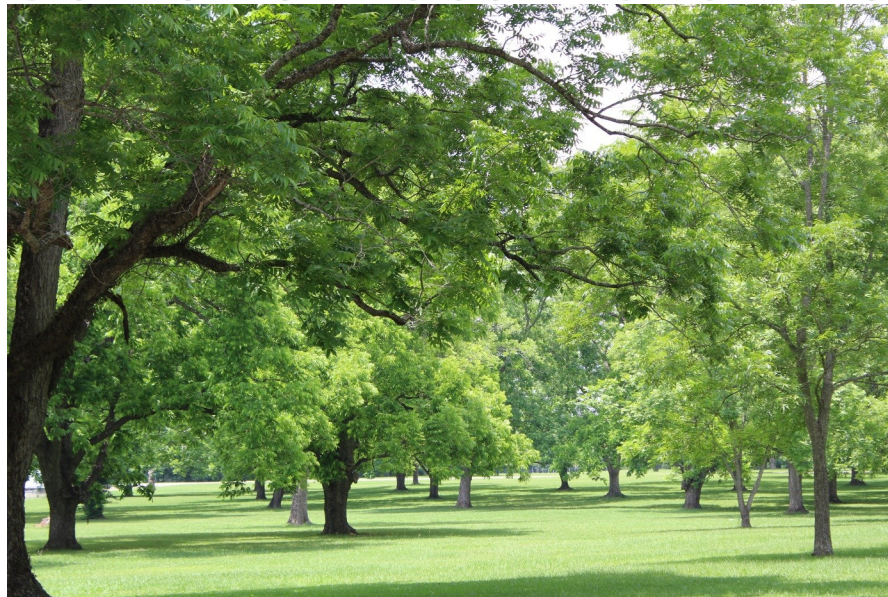


Beautification Program!

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

"Community Spotlight of the Month"

Sunland Pecan Orchard



"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