

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

agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida



Bowling Begins!



On a recent Wednesday afternoon, excitement filled the air as approximately 55 residents boarded State vans and the school bus headed to Kindel Lanes in Marianna. Without doubt, Special Olympics Bowling is an all-time favorite among Sunland residents and is in full swing. Clattering pins and the smashing sounds of bowling balls, along with the frenzied jingling of video games, the clack of billiard balls and the roar of laughter filled the bowling alley. What a perfect backdrop for an afternoon of fun and excitement, and such a sight to see residents from all three Units engaging and participating in the fun!

Solid teamwork from the staff of Units 1, 2 & 3 and CSS ensure that our residents have fun and are able to take advantage of this opportunity. In preparation for the upcoming County & Area Games each resident bowls two (2) complete games to improve their scores. The top bowlers will advance to the State games which will be held in November.

As the afternoon ended and the residents were loading up to return to Sunland, laughter could be heard throughout as all participating had a wonderful time. A big thanks to Kindel Lanes for partnering with us and making this opportunity available for our residents!!



Summer Fun!



Beating the Heat

Bowling & Shooting Hoops!





The Sunland Beacon is pleased to welcome a new editorial "Family Matters" which will offer staff the unique perspective of looking through the eyes of our residents' loved ones. This month, the Cotton family joins us in sharing their thoughts about the Beacon and their sincere appreciation for the care given to their daughter. *This is important because... Family Matters!*

One Parent's Perspective ~ by Anna Cotton

Everyone likes looking at the pictures in the Beacon. We like seeing happy faces, cool activities, and recognition of service and hard won awards. But I want to take a minute to celebrate something a little less obvious. *Engagement*. This could be defined as simply being fully present to one another and able to respond appropriately. It stands out in the photo of my daughter balancing on the knees of her direct care staff person during pool time. If you look closely, you can notice eye contact, a little smile and holding hands for balance and support. It doesn't take much for me to imagine the splashing water and sputtering laughter. Another photo shows game time. What I see is a different staff person and resident looking intently at a game board. I imagine I would hear a patient, coaxing voice from the staff person, maybe some waiting and then some slow motion manipulation of game pieces. Of course, I know what happens next may also include scattered cards and an anxious resident ready for something else entirely. Engagement isn't always smooth and neat, but it always counts. How do we get it? We get it by choosing and training good workers. We get it by giving those workers ongoing support, appreciation and good pay. We get it by being receptive to the creative ideas and caring hearts of committed staff and concerned parents. We get it because we share a contributor's spirit that says together we can do lots of things. Just look at the pictures in the Beacon and celebrate with us!



Rickey, Catherine and Anna Cotton



Catherine and her Mom, along with staff member Stacy Collins enjoying the Sunland pool!

**Editors Note: Photos referenced by Ms. Cotton were featured in the July edition of The Sunland Beacon.*

From the Superintendent...

Let's talk it out...

A good conversation is a great way to start building or strengthening a sense of community. I was invited to a resident meeting last evening. As I entered the home a number of residents warmly greeted me and offered assistance with the items I was carrying in both hands. Another directed me to the sitting area where the meeting was being held. The purpose of the meeting was to reestablish their community meetings. This was particularly exciting to me because I believe there is tremendous value in co-creating the environment in which one lives. The supervisor on shift and staff members also joined the conversation. Supervisor said, "I love working with my guys" and the roundtable discussion began. It was rich with ideas, dos, and don'ts. After a few rounds of likes, dislikes, and wants the group agreed to start the improved community meeting with practicing "respect" (i.e., telephone time, boundaries, personal space). This is good news. Then, they decided they would select peer leaders to continue their weekly meetings. Headed in the right direction to sustain and advance the community. Great work, guys!

Many of these men desire to transition from Sunland and are working with their teams to do so. Therefore, I was not surprised when I was asked: "How do I learn to prepare my own meals?" and "I am leaving soon...how do I get a job?" I am aware that the teams are working with the individuals so I felt it important to forego the formality of saying, "Well talk with your team leader, provide input at your interdisciplinary team meeting, talk with your program operations administrator and so on... ." Rather it resonated with me as a call for action now to advance to the leadership team. We must accelerate initiatives in the works for Fiscal Year 2016 – 2017. Teaching skills that could lead to finding practical, meaningful, or creative community employment (i.e., Art, Music, Culinary). This is on the horizon and in view. Pairing Art, Music, and Culinary can create a space to provide enrichment and complement the transition process. Restaurants are hiring waiters, waitresses, servers, dishwashers, greeters, etc. Similarly with Art and Music, studios hire assistants, aspiring artists or musicians, receptionists, greeters, helpers, and so on. Great opportunity to teach strategies, skills and develop talent that can translate into marketable skills in the community.

As the evening quickly turned to night, I discovered a lot of untapped talent at the close of the community meeting. It was already beginning to feel organic. Guys were talking about changing the appearance of the home, planning an event together, agreeing and disagreeing respectfully, and inviting staff to contribute to the discussion. One staff bowed out, but the guys encouraged his participation. He echoed the supervisor's comments about the home and how he appreciated working with the guys. Looking forward to hearing about what was learned and practiced in the community. Remember, "In every community there is work to be done. In every heart there is the power to do it" (Marianne Williamson).

Geri Williams
Until next time...



Governor's Office of Policy & Budget and Legislative Staff Visit Sunland & DDDP

On Thursday, August 13, Sunland and DDDP hosted a visit by representatives from The House of Representatives and The Senate, along with APD Deputy Director for Operations Tom Rankin, Legislative Affairs Director Robert Brown and other state office staff. For most it was a first visit. Superintendent Williams commented the group was "very impressed with what they saw and experienced at Sunland. They got a greater understanding of the people for whom we work and what some of their needs are. Most noted how professional and caring staff members were. It was affirming to hear State office staff and others acknowledge the hard work and to see firsthand what happens in the Sunland Community. This enlightenment will aid in the information communicated to members of budget and planning; and members of the House and Senate."



Jackson County School employee John Wynn provides APD Deputy Director Tom Rankin with an update on educational programming provided at the School.



Unit 2 POA Lucious Williams discusses the new boiler and its impact on the Center. Pictured are: Lucious Williams with Caleb Hawkes and Rebecca Grissom, both from APD State Office.



Article & Photos contributed by: Beth Basford & Jennie Ann Dean

Unit 1 Activities...

August 5th was a very special day for Unit 1 staff. The Administration took time out to show their appreciation to Unit 1 staff by hosting an "Italian Ice Social." The event was held at Unit 1's "We Can Building." The atmosphere was transformed to that reminiscent of a tropical island paradise as the building was beautifully decorated with lush plants and flowers, coupled with abundant smiles and warm laughter.

Jackson's Vending was very instrumental in assisting with this wonderful event. Owners, Pam and Barbara Jackson did an outstanding job in serving Italian Ice, along with a wide variety of ice cream selections such as Mango, Watermelon, Strawberry, Banana, Coconut, and Cherry. Everyone certainly enjoyed themselves! A special thanks to Unit 1 Administration and to Jackson's Vending. It was a wonderful occasion and the icy snacks hit the spot!

Up Coming Events:

Unit 1 residents continue to enjoy themselves at Rish Park and have an end of summer trip planned for August 19– 21. Harrison House will be busy this month, taking residents on a shopping expedition and then to Citizens Lodge.

Returning to school is one of the biggest in August. Everyone in Unit 1 is looking forward to resuming classes and spending time with their friends and classmates at the Jackson County School. Wishing everybody a wonderful school year.



Article Contributed by: Clevlando Wedderburn

Unit 2 ~ We Are Family!

Summer time is a time of simple pleasure and fun. As it is with every summer there seems never to be enough time to enjoy all the simple things in life.

Throughout the summer, Unit 2 residents enjoyed many activities such as pool parties, sports, cookouts, beach trips, picnics, dances , etc.

The summer is quickly coming to an end and everyone is gearing up to get back in the routine of work and school. Residents of Woodridge and Pierce were recently treated to a "back to work cookout" which everyone really enjoyed.



Article & Photos Contributed by: LaWanda Calhoun

Unit 3 Happenings...

Some of our residents and staff recently made a trip to Fun Zone in Dothan, Alabama. The atmosphere, music and Arcade Games were a blast. We definitely made new friends with others who were there and graciously offered to assist us. The managers were so helpful and kind in making our experience a great one!

August 5th was the first week of Special Olympics Bowling. Centralized Support Services organized the event, which was held at Kindel Lanes in Marianna. Everyone enjoyed the friendly competition and it was a great turnout. We had participation from each of the four houses within Unit 3. Eugene F. from Westside was the leading bowler on our lane. The good times kept rolling when Connally Manor held a back to school Luau on Thursday, August 6th. Unfortunately, due to inclement weather we had to relocate our party indoors. However, as the saying goes "you can't rain on my parade." Despite the weather, the Luau was a great event for everyone!



In memory of...

On July 14, 2015 Jackie E. of Unit 3 Connally Manor passed away. Her service was held at the United Chapel on Center. We will surely miss seeing Jackie self-propelling her wheelchair all throughout the house. Her presence and vibrant personality will be greatly missed.

On July 16, 2015 Evelyn H. of Unit 3/Connally Manor passed away. Evelyn was a sweet person who had a kind spirit about her. At her service, Evelyn's family expressed how appreciative they were to Sunland for caring for her. We are grateful for having known and cared for Evelyn.

Happy Cake Day!!

Residents: Barbara F., Shirley B., & Claire W.

Staff: John Dobek, Darlene Boykin, Henry Sherrod, Kevin Brown, Rochell Glynn, Roxice Choice, Brandy Blighton, Leola Ming, Wonda Branning, Robert Chambliss, & Carolyn Daniels.



Article Contributed by: Allison Jones

Pathways

PATHWAYS STAFF APPRECIATION COOKOUT

Pathways Administration recently sponsored the annual "Staff Appreciation Cookout" for all Pathways employees. The event was held at the Sunland Environmental Park on Friday, July 31st. Employees enjoyed grilled chicken, steaks and ribs with sides, drinks and homemade desserts. Special guests included Forensics Assistant Superintendent Tony Reed, Unit 1 P.O.A. Kim Kennedy, and HR Staff Amanda Johnson, Veronica Mullinax, and Stacey Goodwin.



Article & Photos Contributed by: Juanita Alford

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES DEFENDANT PROGRAM

DDDP & Pathways Sport New Uniform Shirts!

The Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program and the Pathways' Program implemented changes to the Direct Care staff's dress requirements. Effective August 13, 2015, Direct Care staff are required to wear an issued uniform polo shirt Monday-Thursday and have the option to wear an issued tee-shirt or the uniform polo on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and on Holidays. The new shirts have been well received by the staff as you can see in the photos below.



DDDP and Sunland staff participated in a Career Fair on August 20 at Bainbridge State College. Participating in this event were Stacey Godwin and Jodi NeSmith, Human Resources, and Jerrod McGriff and Willie Manuel, DDDP. The Career Fair was sponsored by the Southwest Georgia Workforce Board and was scheduled in response to a local industry plant's closing. We are proud of this Team's efforts in an attempt to reach our recruitment arm out a little further.

Contributed by: Tony Reed, Assistant Superintendent/DDDP

DDDP Celebrates Star Employee

Jerrod McGriff

DDDP is proud to announce that Jerrod McGriff, Behavioral Program Supervisor F/C, Community IV, is our September Star Employee of the month. Mr. McGriff was nominated by his peers for his implementation of the "safe zone" concept in Community IV. As a result, he and the Team in Community IV have been successful in de-escalating situations and reducing the number of reactive strategies. Mr. McGriff has proven to be very dependable and volunteers to work alternate shifts to assist with supervisory coverage needs. He is an excellent role model for new employees and we are proud that he is a part of Team DDDP! Great job and congratulations go out to Mr. McGriff.



Article & Photos Contributed by: Tony Reed

HEALTH & WELLNESS CORNER

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

WHAT IS THE PROSTATE?

- The prostate is a small walnut-shaped gland in the male reproductive system that is located beneath the bladder. It surrounds the upper part of the urethra, which is the tube that carries urine from the bladder.
- The prostate is necessary for sexual activity and urination.
- It also produces Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) which is a substance that increases when a man has prostate cancer.

WHAT IS PROSTATE CANCER?

- Cancer is a disease that begins in cells, which are the building blocks that make up all tissue and organs of the body – including the prostate
- Normal cells grow, divide, and die on a regular schedule.
- Sometimes something goes wrong with this process and the cells don't die as they should and instead, create a growth or tumor.
- Tumors can be benign, meaning not cancer, or malignant, meaning cancer.
- Most prostate cancer grows very slowly with many men never knowing they have the disease.
- Some prostate cancers are aggressive and will spread to other parts of the body.

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed non-skin cancer in U.S. men. It is estimated that 220,800 men will hear the words "You have prostate cancer" in 2015. Fortunately when diagnosed early, prostate cancer can be treated effectively and nearly 100 percent of men diagnosed today will be alive in five years.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF PROSTATE CANCER?

- Most men do not have symptoms of early stage prostate cancer.
- Symptoms may include frequent or painful urination, hesitation to start or continue urinating, blood in the urine, and painful ejaculation.
- These symptoms may occur if the prostate is enlarged and no cancer is present.
- Common symptoms of advanced prostate cancer include pelvic or back pain, leg weakness, anemia, and weight loss.

WHAT NEXT . . . ?

Talk with a health care provider about:

Personal risk factors &

Screening tests, including a PSA blood test AND a digital rectal exam.

REMEMBER: Early detection saves lives!

For more information visit the American Cancer Society's Website @ www.cancer.org



Article Contributed by: Sandy Helms, ARNP

From the Sunland Safety Committee...



Safety At Night
Going for a walk on a summer's evening can be relaxing and fun!

But...remember to be safe!

- Wear light colored clothing
- Use reflective items on shoes
- Use bug repellent and wear long sleeves
- Hydrate! Drink fluids
- Stay in lighted areas
- Walk on the side of the road away from oncoming traffic
- Go with a buddy

Brought to you by the Sunland Safety Committee



BE PREPARED!
The Sunland Emergency & Disaster Response Manual is available on SharePoint:
<https://apdf1.sharepoint.com/sites/ddc/sunland/common/>



The Office of Quality Management welcomes Keith Caplinger, Environmental Specialist I and his staff to Quality Management. Keith has numerous years of experience in fire safety, environmental and physical plant inspections. Keith is always committed to make sure Sunland is safe and clean for residents, employees, and visitors. We are very happy Keith and his staff has joined our quality team!

Article Contributed by: Mary Gallagher, Safety Committee Chair & Director of Quality Management



NURSING NEWS

Karey Hewett, RNS is a new face for some of us, but some might remember her from days gone by when she worked as a Therapy Aid before she became a nurse. Now she has returned home to Sunland and we are excited to have her join our department.

Mary Jane Nelson, RN, NPS, is retiring in September. During her tenure she has functioned in every nursing job at Sunland. She has been such a valuable resource not only to our department but to everyone on center. She has decided she doesn't want a big party, so make sure you stop by her office and wish her good luck and good fortune as she prepares to start a new chapter in her life.

We are gearing up for our next AHCA survey which means chart audits, inspections and medication pass observation. Do you know how many medication errors we are allowed when AHCA observes a medication pass? *None. Zero. Nada.* No pressure there!



**Nursing is
the gentle art of
caring.**

Article Contributed by: Suzanne Laramore, RN

Employee Recognition Program



JULY STAR AWARDS

STAR TEAMS

Team Human Resources

Veronica Mullinax, Stacey Goodwin, Lizzie Holland

STAR EMPLOYEES

Lisa Sexton

Anthony Calloway

HUMAN RESOURCES



July 2015

Patrick Hill
Namerius Davis
Syntha Alvarez
Patricia Wilson
Roderick Laster
Scott Bass
Tarrell Green
Tracy Miller

Tim Benton
Leslie Jackson
Kiandra Everett
Daniel Marks
Allie Dupree
Jason McDuffie
Carlos McMillon
Karey Hewett



Contributed by: Joni Laramore



<https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>

For 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”

~ Unit 1 ~

Johnson House

“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; Sandy Helms, ARNP - Wellness Committee; Suzanne Laramore, RN - Safety Committee