



THE CROSSROADS

FALL 2024

A NORTH MISSISSIPPI REGIONAL CENTER PUBLICATION



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A Letter from Dr. Hayles

Dear NMRC Family and Friends,

I hope you enjoy the latest edition of the NMRC Crossroads Newsletter featuring exciting highlights from the late summer and early fall. This time of the year can become very busy with the shopping needed for kids to return to school and the weatherizing of homes and yards ahead of the cooler temperatures. Yet, I am so often reminded of the amazing NMRC employees who are full of energy and the motivation necessary to give their best every single day. Whether or not a staff member is in direct support role or an indirect one, they are all essential to the remarkable NMRC team. They understand the importance of working together so that each client served on the main campus and in the community programs, have meaningful choices, positive experiences, and increased opportunities that will improve their skill level and most importantly, will further enrich their lives.

Over the last few months, thanks to the Friends of NMRC Organization, we have strengthened community partnerships through renewed memberships and much greater organizational participation. Our community relationships are essential for expanding awareness about the many capabilities of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and how, with the appropriate services, they can and do contribute greatly to their home communities and our society at large.

On behalf of NMRC, join us as we celebrate within these pages, the happy smiles, special moments, and outstanding achievements of the clients and staff members.



Edith M. Hayles, Ph.D.
NMRC Director

NMRC Mission Statement

ENHANCING THE ABILITIES and
PROMOTING THE INDEPENDENCE

of persons with *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*

..... by **Providing Quality Care,**
Comprehensive Services and

FAMILY SUPPORT, *with Dignity and Respect*



Director's Office



Kerry Nichols
NMRC Assistant Director

Kerry Nichols joined the North Mississippi Regional Center (NMRC) in the Spring of 1990 as a Director Care Worker. After receiving his bachelor's degree, he became a psychology technician while earning his master's in educational psychology. He served clients on the main campus as a master's level behavior specialist before moving to NMRC administration as Assistant Director of the Community Transition Services (CTS) Department, and thereafter, as the Director of the CTS Department. In 2008, Mr. Nichols became Assistant Director of NMRC and has served under the leadership of two NMRC Program Administrators.



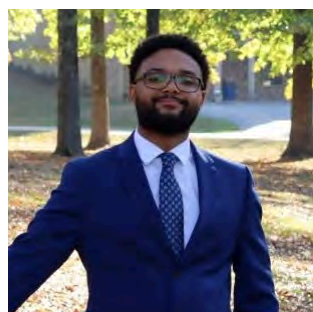
Tamara Webb
NMRC Assistant Director

Tamara Webb is the second Assistant Director at the North Mississippi Regional Center. Currently, she is the Administrator for Community Transition Services, Educational Services, Foster Grandparents, Recreation Therapy, Social Services, Team Coordination, and Quality Care Investigations departments. Ms. Webb has served NMRC for over 18 years. Prior to becoming Assistant Director, she served in various programmatic and administrative roles within several departments at NMRC, including Resident Living, Recreation Therapy, and Community Transition Services.



Dwana Harvey
Office Manager

Dwana Harvey joined the North Mississippi Regional Center in the fall of 2021, bringing over 15 years of comprehensive experience in retail and office management. In her current role as Office Manager for the Director of NMRC, Ms. Harvey leverages her expertise and certifications in Administrative and Executive Services, which she earned through the Mississippi State Personnel Board. Her knowledge and experience contribute significantly to the efficient and effective operations of the office.



Kade Campbell
Administrative Assistant

Kade Campbell joined the North Mississippi Regional Center in the Spring of 2019 after graduating with an Associate's Degree in General Studies. He began his career as a Direct Support Professional in Maple Point providing direct care to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Mr. Campbell joined the Director's Office to assist Dr. Hayles with her endeavors and positively contribute to the organization by utilizing his collaborative talents and social skillset in a professional manner for which he developed over his years of working with NMRC clients and their families.

2024-2025 Board of Mental Health



Courtney Phillips
Chair



Dr. Alyssa Killebrew
Vice Chair



Dr. Manda Griffin



Dr. Jim Herzog



Teresa Mosley



Dr. John Montgomery



Stewart Rutledge

DMH Executive Leadership



Wendy Bailey



Jake Hutchins



Craig Kittrell

Mental Health
Mississippi



DMH *Training*

On September 9, 2024 NMRC welcomed DMH staff for a technical assistance training for the Support Coordination Department. The training focused on reminders/ refreshers, upcoming updates on the Support Coordination manual, and possible future trainings



DWANA HARVEY

Shines as Administrative and Executives Services

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS SPEAKER

When Ms. Harvey first enrolled in the Administrative Services program offered by the Mississippi State Personnel Board, she was driven by the desire to acquire valuable knowledge and skills

VALUABLE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

that would elevate her professional capabilities. Little did she anticipate that her journey would lead to her recognition as a standout figure throughout the entire state—someone who not only exemplifies excellence but also has the ability to motivate, encourage, and inspire her peers on the path to earning their prestigious certifications.

Her remarkable achievements have not gone unnoticed; the certification program coordinator has frequently invited her to participate in panel discussions, where she shares her insights with participants in both the Administrative Services Certification Program and the Executive Services Certification Program.

In these sessions, Ms. Harvey emphasizes the importance of perseverance and determination, encouraging others to embrace these qualities as they strive to achieve their goals.

Her positivity shines brightly as she engages with program participants, serving as a living testament to the transformative power of hard work, dedication, and a genuine enthusiasm for learning. In every interaction, Ms. Harvey emphasizes that success is not merely a destination but a journey marked by continuous growth and self-improvement. She often shares personal anecdotes from her own experiences, illustrating how her dedication to professional development has opened doors and created new opportunities

CREATED NEW OPPORTUNITIES

in her career. By embodying the values she advocates, she not only uplifts those around her but also instills a sense of confidence and resilience in her peers. In this way, Ms. Harvey becomes not just a mentor but a beacon of hope and encouragement, guiding others on their paths to success.



NMRC EMPLOYEES HONORED in **JACKSON FOR PRESTIGIOUS** *CPM and CSM Program Completion*

Cecil Dowden, Allison Ivy and April Vanderford (pictured left to right) completed the Mississippi Certified Public Manager® (MCPM) Program, which is a nationally-recognized leadership development program for public managers and supervisors. The federal government and 42 states participate in the National CPM Consortium, which accredits and establishes the Certified Public Manager® designation requirements.

Chester Caldwell (pictured far right) earned the Certificate in Supervisory Management after completing over 90 hours of MSCPM coursework covering a spectrum of management and leadership skill building, individual performance and broader organizational and public policy issues.

Two NMRC Staff Recognized in Jackson for Earning Coveted

Human Resources Certification

Dr. Susan Jenkins and Kelvin Hill (1st picture below) recently completed the Human Resources Certification Program (HRCP) which is designed to develop well-trained human resources practitioners in Mississippi state government by providing a comprehensive training program specifically tailored to human resource professionals at both the technical and managerial levels. HRCP focuses on the application of key human resources rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and practices.

HRCP

Graduates



ASCP

Graduates

The Administrative Services Certification Program (ASCP) is a comprehensive training and certification program for support staff of governmental entities. The program combines classroom training and hands-on learning to develop teamwork, leadership, and customer service skills. ASCP graduates are highly regarded team members in their agencies and the State of Mississippi. *Pictured: Teresa Wright, Kathy Cunningham, Janet Herring, Dorette Wimberly, Melinda Harper and Monica Taylor*

ESCP

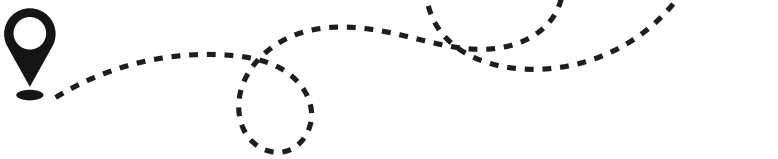
Graduates



MSPB developed the Executive Services Certification Program (ESCP) for administrative professionals to continue their professional development. Participants earning the ESCP designation have completed the three levels of the ASCP curriculum and three additional levels of coursework. ESCP encourages administrative professionals to cultivate existing skills, contribute to their organization's vision within their individual roles, and enhance leadership skills. *Pictured: Tammy Keller, Janeth Neely, Dayton Smith, Earnesha Dunn, Dwana Harvey and Tabitha Ivy*

DEDICATED NMRC STAFF REPRESENT AT VARIOUS CONFERENCES

Across the Country



- 📍 Sherrie Jenkins, FNP-C, represented NMRC at the 2024 AANP National Conference in Nashville.
- 📍 Kimberly Jacobs, Jillian Tyler and Chassydi Turner had lunch with the legendary Dr Temple Grandin at the Creating Your Own Path: Successful Transitions for Persons with Autism conference in Jackson
- 📍 Markila Bracy, Nekira Todd, Chassydi Turner, DaPorshia Tellis and Jillian Tyler at the NAQ Conference in St Louis.





Allen Rooker, Donielle Jenkins, and Tamara Webb (pictured left to right) had the opportunity to represent NMRC at the American College of Health Care Administrators 2024 Convocation & Expo in Myrtle Beach.



Camille Thimmes attended the 2024 Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo in Minneapolis

2024 MH/IDD Joint Conference

Kinloch Gill Memorial Award Recipient



Kerry Nichols

The Kinloch Gill Memorial Award is bestowed upon a person who exemplifies a commitment to excellence in the field of community mental health and intellectual developmental disabilities services. The award is named in memory of Dr. Kinloch Gill who was a leader among the founding generation of professionals who established the community mental health system in Mississippi.



**Oxford Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting Luncheon*

NMRC

STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS & Community Ties



*Shanika Ward
2024 Women of Oxford*



United Way Flashbash Bash



Oxford Lafayette Chamber of Commerce Red Carpet Gala



*Leadership Lafayette Graduates: Abby Evans,
Dr. Susan Jenkins, Vivica Giles*

JASON MURPHREE

MAPLE POINT



When you hear the name “Murph,” it’s hard not to smile. Anyone who has had the joy of being in his presence knows they’re in the company of one of the kindest and most uplifting souls around. Jason radiates happiness wherever he goes, his contagious smile lighting up the room. His thoughtfulness is evident in countless ways, such as growing beautiful flowers that he lovingly arranges and delivers to friends at NMRC



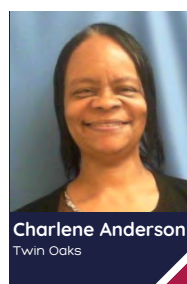
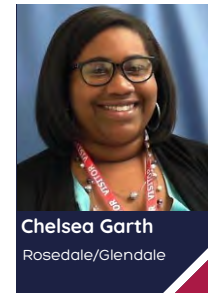
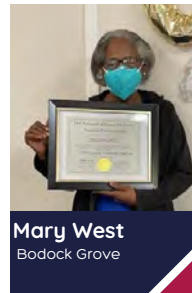
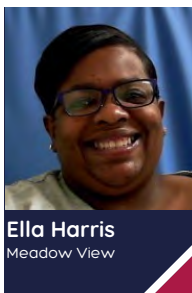
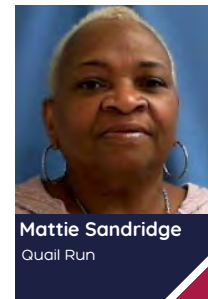
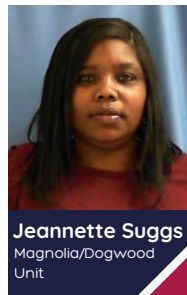
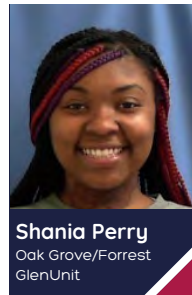
But Jason also has a competitive spirit, which shines through in his weekly SEC football picks against the staff in Therapy Services, IT, and his friends at Woodlea South. These picks have become a cherished tradition for him, and Therapy Services is actively helping him enhance his communication skills to express his choices more effectively. A lifelong sports enthusiast, Jason eagerly volunteered to carry the torch during NMRC’s celebration of the 2024 Summer Olympics. Most days, you’ll find him diligently working on his active resistive exercises alongside his longtime friend, Jason O., while sharing his passion for Ole Miss football.



Family is everything to Jason, and he cherishes every moment spent with them. Whether attending Friends events on campus, enjoying weekend visits filled with laughter, or proudly escorting Riley as part of the Calhoun Academy Homecoming Court, the love and encouragement from his family bring an unparalleled joy to his heart. In addition to being the life of the party at NMRC, Jason finds solace in attending church, where he connects with his community in meaningful ways. He has a particular fondness for Dr. Pepper and 3 Musketeers bars, simple pleasures that perfectly complement his joyful nature. In every smile, every gesture, and every moment shared, Jason leaves an indelible mark on our hearts, reminding us of the profound impact one person can have on the world.



DIRECT SUPPORT *Outstanding* PROFESSIONALS



These NMRC
employees were
voted "Most
Outstanding" and
honored during
Direct Support
Professionals
Week.

LISA MOORE

The impact of Hurricane Katrina was profound and so many lives were changed as a result of the devastating event. Many Americans found themselves displaced, including individuals with IDD served by our sister program on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. NMRC opened their doors and welcomed some of the most precious individuals we have had the joy of serving. A team was quickly put together to staff Gum Tree in Tupelo, a temporary community home set-up for the folks from South MS Regional Center. Hours of training were poured into the team, and NMRC was pleased with the home away from home provided for our friends from “South”.

After the clients were able to return to their home near the beach, the NMRC team charged with staffing Gum Tree transferred to other NMRC programs and remain some of the most dedicated team members to this day. Lisa Moore is one of those devoted employees who stood out from day one at Gum Tree and still shines bright to this day.

Lisa’s love and compassion for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities runs deep. She knows firsthand about the supports and care that her own “baby brother”, BJ, needs as a resident of NMRC. When Lisa pops in to visit BJ, his face lights up and you can see the beauty in their connection.

LISA AND HER BROTHER “BJ”



Lisa has spent most of her 24-year career at NMRC in supervisory and leadership roles where she has placed a great deal of value in training others. Many who have come through the community programs have been trained by Lisa in some way which has helped shaped some of the leadership at NMRC to this day. Her thoroughness and desire for excellence result in her expectations for teams to provide only the best care and quality service. The impression she has made on NMRC and the influence she has had on the people she has supervised will have a lasting effect within the organization benefitting the amazing clients, including her brother BJ.

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Allen ROOKER

TOP
40 UNDER 40
2024
MS BUSINESS JOURNAL



Pictured (left to right): Jacova Jenkins, Courtney Rooker, Allen Rooker, Dr. Edith Hayles, Tamara Webb



Allen Rooker, NMRC Community Transition Services Director, was recently selected by the Mississippi Business Journal for the coveted Top 40 Under 40!! Allen is proud to serve individuals through his work at NMRC. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in education from Mississippi State University, a Master of Public Administration from Arkansas State University, and is a licensed nursing home administrator.



He is a member of the Arc of Mississippi, the Association of People Supporting Employment First, the American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and the American College of Healthcare Administrators.



The AmeriCorps Seniors Foster Grandparent Program recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. Grandparents of NMRC and the Lafayette-Oxford-University Community are made up of dedicated seniors who provide love and support to the individuals we serve and children in Lafayette county.

*Celebrating 50 Years
of Foster Grandparents*



EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Broadis Toles III
"Trey"

NMRC HONORED EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH AT A LUNCHEON IN AUGUST WHERE MR. TOLES WAS ANNOUNCED AS RECIPIENT OF THE PRESTIGIOUS EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR IN THE PROGRAMMATIC SUPPORT CATEGORY.



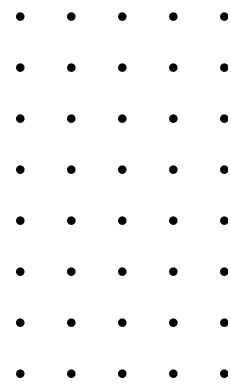
MR. MARIO HERRON WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE LUNCHEON, BUT HE WAS ANNOUNCED AS THE EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR IN THE DIRECT SUPPORT CATEGORY.

NMRC IS PROUD OF THESE GENTLEMEN FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING WORK AND THE QUALITY SERVICE THEY PROVIDE.





**NORTH MISSISSIPPI
REGIONAL CENTER**



EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



ANTHONY DAVIS

**DIRECT CARE
APRIL**



JORDAN CRUMP

**PROGRAMMATIC SERVICES
APRIL**



TEDVION LOVEBERRY

**DIRECT CARE
MAY**



TABITHA IVY

**PROGRAMMATIC SERVICES
MAY**



FERRENDIA YOUNG

**DIRECT CARE
JUNE**



BROADIS TOLES III

**PROGRAMMATIC SERVICES
JUNE**





Everyday Joys
at NMRC







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