



NORTH MISSISSIPPI REGIONAL CENTER

# THE CROSSROADS

FALL 2025





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# A Letter From Dr. Hayle's

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Dear NMRC Family and Friends,

With the end of the month upon us and as we leave the beauty of the Fall season behind, please join me in pausing, reflecting, and being thankful for the world around us. Just like the different seasons, many different people will come into and out of our lives. Each one of them has value, purpose, and meaning. Pausing to think about other people and their impact in your life and in the lives of others leads us to a sense of well-being and reminds us of the NMRC “One Team” mindset. Celebrating others happens easier when we pause. Reflecting during this time of year at NMRC includes sincere recognition and gratefulness for many people (clients, employees, families, and friends). My heart is joyous every time I think of the clients dancing during the October Fest, singing in the Christmas Choir, and/or staff helping a client to pack their luggage for a special home visit. Likewise, I am filled with joy when reflecting on NMRC in general, our mission, and how we remain strong because of dedicated employees, advocacy from Family and Friends, and support from many other caring Mississippians.

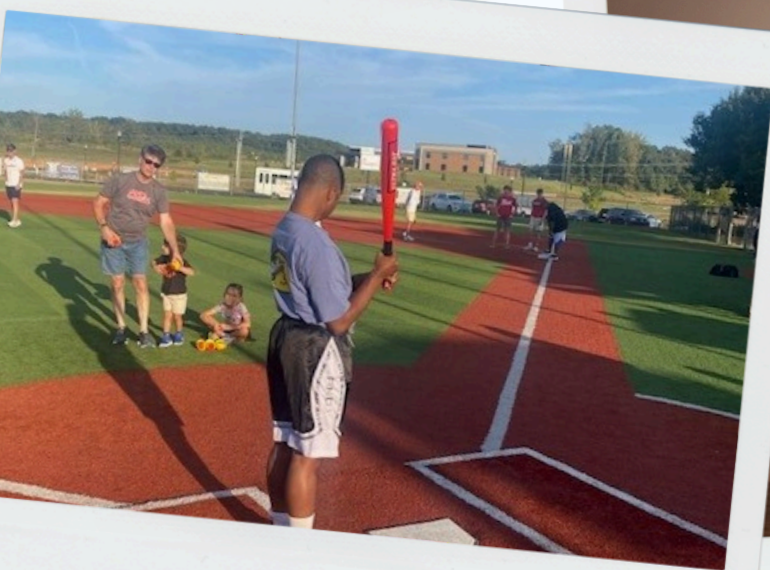
Being thankful starts with the amazing people with intellectual disabilities served by NMRC and how their needs are the reason NMRC exist. Because their happiness, services, and quality of life are our responsibility, there is wisdom in understanding that the clients teach us so much more about faith, goodness, and inter-dependence than we could ever teach them about skill development. Think about it...NMRC clients rely on assistance for some of their basic needs and regardless of their challenges, they happily meet the day with smiles and gratitude. They know how to graciously treasure each moment. Their attitudes and resiliency are reminders to us on how to truly live the right way and how to be aware of the importance of the people around us and the help they provide or can offer to us in our lives.

Thankfulness further includes the incredible staff I encounter daily who have also chosen a career or life purpose which is about helping others. What a noble and worthy calling it is to help another person to have a better life, which matters greatly. In closing, I do hope that everyone has a beautiful holiday season as well as a bright and blessed new year.



**Edith M. Hayles, Ph.D.**  
*NMRC Director*





*Enhancing the abilities and promoting the independence of persons with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities by providing quality care, comprehensive services and family support, with dignity and respect*





# Mississippi State Personnel Board Workforce Development Certification

*Class of 2025*  
**NIMRC** *Recipients*

3

**Certified  
Public  
Manager  
(CPM)**

4

**Certificate of  
Supervisory  
Management  
(CSM)**

4

**Human  
Resources  
Certification  
Program  
(HRCP)**

14

**Administrative  
Services  
Certification  
Program  
(ASCP)**

8

**Executive  
Services  
Certification  
Program  
(ESCP)**



# Class of 2025

## **SPB OFFICE OF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT** *NMRC Certification Recipients*

### **MS CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGERS (CPM)**

CHESTER CALDWELL  
ROBBY KELLY  
STACY WILLIAMS

### **CERTIFICATES OF SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT (CSM)**

RACHEL DAVIDSON      DONIELLE JENKINS  
ROBBY KELLY      MARK ROBINSON

### **HUMAN RESOURCES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (HRCP)**

DR. EDITH HAYLES      ALLISON IVY  
KERRY NICHOLS      ALLEN ROOKER

### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (ASCP)**

CAMILLE BEASLEY      MARKILA BRACY      KADE CAMPBELL  
BRITTANY DAMONS-PORTER      CALANDRA DENMAN  
JAN JEFFREYS      DYLAN MULLINS      DEMEATRIX PETTIS  
AUDRI RICE      CHARMIE SCHMITZ      CHASSYDI TURNER  
JILLIAN TYLER      MARLENA WHITE      RODERICA WILLIS

### **EXECUTIVE SERVICES CERTIFICATION PROGRAM (ESCP)**

KATHY CUNNINGHAM      MELINDA HARPER  
DEMEATRIX PETTIS      MONICA TAYLOR  
JANET HERRING      RODERICA WILLIS      TERESA WRIGHT





# NIMRC

## 2025 Graduation Program .....



Picture 1, ASCP Graduates: (Standing) Dylan Mullins, Kade Campbell, Chassydi Turner, Charmie Schmitz, Camille Beasley, and Jan Jeffreys. (Seated) Markila Bracy, Calandra Denman, and Brittany Damons

Picture 2, ESCP Graduates: Monica Taylor, Melinda Harper, and Kathy Cunningham

Picture 3, CPM Graduates: Stacy Williams and Robby Kelly







Picture 4, HRCF Graduates: Kerry Nichols, Dr. Edith Hayles, Alison Ivy, and Allen Rooker



Picture 5, CSM Graduates: Donielle Jenkins, Mark Robinson, and Robby Kelly

*Congratulations*



# MIKEY

*Beautifully Brave: A Journey Told by Kim Jackson*



On September 2016, Mikey came into our lives. At 12 years old and weighing just 77 pounds, he was completely dependent on others for his care. Diagnosed with IDD, Autism, Epilepsy, and other medical complexities, he arrived at Maple Point Cottage. Mikey was a fresh face in a vibrant place, and he needed a village to help him survive. From the very beginning, that village showed up. Each department at the North Mississippi Regional Center (NMRC) evaluated Mikey and stepped in to offer services. He received physical therapy to help him regain strength, and he was given a helmet for protection as he learned to walk again. He also had speech, therapeutic recreation, active treatment, medical care, psychological services, and a social worker. Every area of NMRC seemed to touch his life and help light his path as we slowly started to see the spark in Mikey's eyes get brighter and brighter.

One of his biggest champions was the Maple Point supervisor, who he lovingly calls "Granny QT". While at NMRC, Mikey received on-campus education programming, participated in hippotherapy (which greatly contributed to him walking again), and joined in community outings through recreation therapy. You can still see the joy on Mikey's face to this day at events when he sees Chester Caldwell, Director of Recreation Therapy. He always makes sure to tell me afterward as he's beaming, "I hugged Chester today!" It's a moment he treasures and one he never forgets to share. Day by day at NMRC, he made progress. Step by step, Mikey began to move forward.



I was there, watching that light in Mikey get brighter with every new accomplishment. Every day, Mikey surprised me and inspired me. Over time, I became part of his daily rhythm, Monday through Friday, watching him grow, change, and open up in ways that moved me deeply. Our bond grew stronger with each passing day, built on trust, laughter, and the quiet understanding that something special was forming between us. He changed my life in ways I never expected. And somewhere deep in my heart, I knew I had to give back to this boy who had given me so much without even realizing it. What better way to do that than to offer him the chance to experience life alongside us, not just as a visitor, but as part of our family? After a year-long journey to get foster care licensed, my husband and I were able to bring Mikey home. He was so happy and eager that he packed his own bags.

At home, he continued to attend school, receive physical and speech therapy, and settle into a new routine. Almost immediately, he began making major strides in his daily living skills. Even through the hard days, Mikey never let life knock him down for long. He has faced more challenges than most, and he has beaten the odds time and time again. He is resilient, brave, and determined to be like everyone else, to live fully, and to keep pushing forward.



Kim and Mikey with Mark Robinson and staff  
from Dr Rosa's Office

Mikey with Allison Love, Support Coordinator



Mikey might come off a little shy at first, but once he gets to know you, he never forgets you. He's smart, funny, and full of personality, with a sense of humor that keeps everyone smiling. Music is a big part of his life—especially country. Blake Shelton, Jason Aldean, and Luke Bryan are daily musts, and he loves going to concerts. Come Fall, it's all about SEC football! Saturdays mean changing jerseys to match the team he's rooting for although Ole Miss is always number one. He keeps up with football stats, reads about his favorite singers, and loves watching videos on restoring old cars—especially Fords. One day, he dreams of owning a blue Ford F-150. Mikey enjoys camping and we often get away in the camper. He also works hard, helping his dad with plumbing and electrical jobs—loading equipment, running tools, and being part of the crew. Once Mikey lets you in, you are part of his world and that's a pretty great place to be.

When COVID hit, just like for so many others, Mikey's world shifted to virtual everything. It was an adjustment for us all, but especially for him. Still, he adapted, and with the support of our family and some incredible caregivers, he continued to thrive. Through the IDD waiver, Mikey has been able to receive continued services, coordinated by Allison Love—who has been by his side since the beginning. Because of her, and others like her, he's been able to participate in recreational activities, receive medical care, and have one-on-one support. We're grateful for every person who has stood by Mikey over the years.

One of the biggest decisions we all made was returning Mikey to school. We didn't want him to miss out on any opportunity to learn and grow. And we are so happy we did! He attended Lafayette High School from 2023 to 2025, where he found joy in everything. When graduation came around, Mikey had one request: he wanted to walk the stage just like everyone else. Mikey lives with Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome, a rare and severe form of epilepsy that causes frequent seizures. He wears a hard-shell helmet with a face bar during the day to protect his head in case he falls. But for graduation, he asked to leave the helmet off just for that moment so he could wear his graduation cap. We were nervous, but we said yes. His teachers reached out to two classmates who stood beside him, asking them to keep an eye on him, and they agreed without hesitation. On graduation night, Mikey walked the stage in dress clothes, a fresh haircut, cap and gown... and no helmet. And he did it with the biggest smile you've ever seen. He felt proud, and so did we.



Mikey's name on the jumbo screen during the  
graduation ceremony at the Ole Miss Pavilion



Today, Mikey is still full of curiosity and drive. He soaks in the world around him. He is still determined; still strong; still our warrior. He adores his family especially “Granny QT”, and shares a deep bond with his nurse, his teachers, doctors, physical therapists, and many dear friends. He’s fearless, strong-willed and **beautifully brave**. He’s proof that resilience and love can move mountains. No amount of training or education can fully prepare you to be a caregiver in the home—things change daily, and we’re constantly learning as we go. But through it all, our family has been blessed beyond measure because of Mikey. He has already accomplished more than we could have imagined, and we know this is just the beginning. Mikey has the whole world to conquer—and there’s no doubt in our minds, he will.



Mikey with “Granny QT” Zinn





## 2025 Employees of the Year



*Katina Kimmons*

**2025 Employee of the Year  
Programmatic Category**

Pictured with Vivica Giles, Resident Living Director, and  
DaPorshia Tellis, Resident Living Assistant Director

*Sharon Taylor*

**2025 Employee of the Year  
Direct Support Category**

Pictured with Mirenda Woodall, CTS Assistant Director, and  
Allen Rooker, CTS Director





# Employees of the Month



**Shina Webster**  
*Resident Living*



**Katina Kimmons**  
*Resident Living*



**Tamatha Fuller**  
*Resident Living*



**Nicole Dunn**  
*Resident Living*



**Rhonda Hood**  
*CTS/Poplar Point*



**Tammy Keller**  
*Nursing Services*



**Tea'Aira Pegues**  
*Resident Living*



**Clarissa Lloyd**  
*Resident Living*

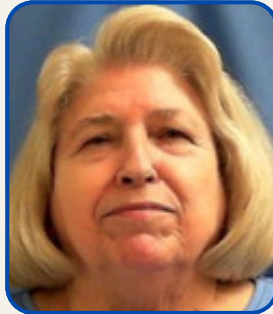


**Shawn McAlister**  
*CTS/Twin Oaks*

# December 2024 - June 2025



**Daniel Spears**  
*Recreation Therapy*



**Linda Gilliam**  
*CTS/Poplar Point*



**Markila Bracy**  
*CTS/Elmwood  
Redwood*



**LuAnne Ervin**  
*CTS/Kilmicheal*



**Jovon Reed**  
*Support Coordination*











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