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## OAK CIRCLE CENTER CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



*Representative John Moore, Dr. Robert Maddux, Clinical Director; James Chastain, MSH Director; Dr. Maria Scarbrough, Oak Circle Center Service Chief; Roger McMurty, MH Bureau chief retired; Sarah (Hendrix) Marshall, NP*

On April 24, 1996, a red ribbon was cut on the front porch of Oak Circle Center, which had been extensively renovated to house Mississippi State Hospital's program for adolescents and younger children.

On April 26, 2016, that ceremony was reenacted on that very same front porch on Building 23 as MSH celebrated the 20th anniversary of the grand reopening of Oak Circle Center.

MSH Director James G. Chastain, who took part in both ribbon-cutting ceremonies, captured the spirit of the day when he quoted from a favorite author and radio personality, Garrison Keillor: "Nothing we do for children is ever wasted."

Oak Circle Center is a diagnostic evaluation and short-term treatment unit for

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# ASPIRE

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## MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

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## PRODUCTION

**Editorial**  
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**VISION**  
Mental wellness in every life, in every home,  
and in every community.

**MISSION**  
To help the individuals we serve achieve mental wellness by encouraging hope, promoting safety and supporting recovery while utilizing resources efficiently.

**OUR GOALS**  
1. To provide a comprehensive, person-centered and recovery-oriented system of care for individuals served at Mississippi State Hospital.

2. To ensure patients and residents receive quality services in safe settings and utilize information/data management to enhance decision making and service delivery.

3. To provide administrative oversight and management to effectively and efficiently administer services.

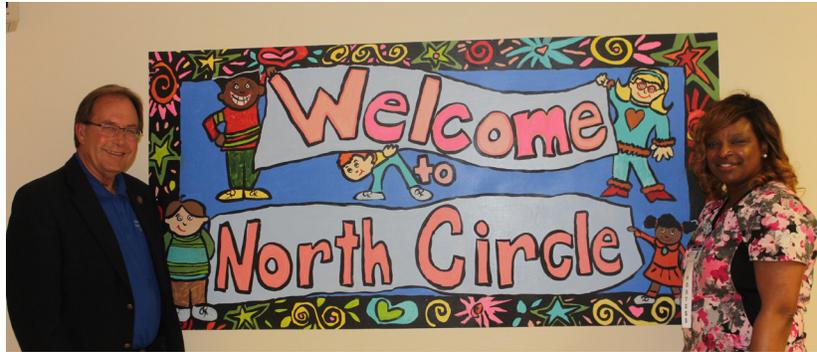
**CORE VALUES**  
Respect – Relationships – Accountability –  
Teamwork – Diversity

**MEMBER OF**  
Mississippi Department of Mental Health  
American Hospital Association  
Mississippi Hospital Association  
Southern States Psychiatric  
Hospital Association

**ACCREDITED BY**  
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Representative John Moore and Portia Porter, LPN

children and adolescents between the ages of 4 years and 17 years, 11 months. OCC's goal is "to provide each patient with individualized, interdisciplinary treatment in a growth-oriented, therapeutic environment. The program assists each patient to progress to a higher level of functioning and to move on to a less restrictive environment."

The hospital first opened a unit for adolescents ages 12 years to 17 years, 11 months in 1993. Housed on Building 45, it consisted of 30 beds.

The Oak Circle Center building (B-23), which was originally constructed in 1929, was renovated and reopened in 1996 with five units: two for adolescent males, two for adolescent females and the other for young children. The total number of beds was expanded to 60, 48 for adoles-

cents and 12 for children.

"Today, we remind ourselves how valuable the service at Oak Circle Center is to so many families across Mississippi," Chastain told the gathering at the 20th anniversary ceremony. "It's a day to thank and recognize those people who have made Oak Circle Center a reality."

Chastain thanked the State Legislature for providing the funding for the OCC renovation, and he thanked in particular Rep. John Moore, who took part in both ribbon-cutting ceremonies.

"We are grateful for your support then and your continued support," Chastain said.

Chastain also thanked the architects who designed the building renova-

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tion and the Department of Mental Health leadership, most notably the late Dr. Randy Hendrix, DMH Executive Director from 1986-2007.

“This program wouldn’t be here today without his leadership,” Chastain said.

Last but hardly least, Chastain acknowledged the OCC staff, past and present.

“We are most thankful for any person who has worked at Oak Circle Center in any capacity,” he said. “These are people who want to work with children. It’s a long, long list. ... Today, we celebrate your dedication and compassion.”

Dr. Robert Maddux, MSH Clinical Director, paid tribute to five long-serving staff members: Elizabeth Ja-

cobs, George Barry, Candice Larkin, Dr. Lisa Stone and Billy Walton.

Dr. Maria Scarborough, OCC Service Chief, also spoke at the ceremony and applauded the staff for the special talent it takes to work with children.

“As the parent raises the child, the child also raises the parent,” she said. “It feels that way here. The staff here is incredible.”

The ceremony concluded with a performance by the Oak Circle Center Choir, directed by Marie Robinson.

Each of the three OCC units prepared a poster for judging. The children’s unit, North Circle, was awarded “most creative,” the male unit “best theme,” and the female unit “most creative.”



# LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON 2016

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



*Shane Garrad, Bridgette Hancock, and James Chastain*

**B**ridgette Hancock stood under the bright lights of the big stage at Galloway United Methodist Church on Feb. 17 and talked about her darkest year, 2012.

Hancock, 30 at the time, had been abusing drugs and alcohol since ninth grade, and things were spiraling out of control. She was arrested for DUI twice in one week and three times in a month. She lost her driver's license, and some people close to her feared for her very life.

"I knew I had to do something different," Hancock told the Galloway crowd that included 46 members of the Mississippi Senate and House of Representatives at the annual Appreciation Luncheon sponsored by Friends of Mississippi State Hospital and Friends of Hudspeth Regional Center.

Hancock, from Gulfport, had heard from a friend about Fairland Treatment Center, located in Dublin, Mis-

issippi. On Jan. 2, 2013, she confronted her demons and entered the program.

Today, Hancock is, in her words, "clean and sober," attending college and working as a Certified Peer Support Specialist at Fairland.

"I never, ever dreamed I'd be working in a treatment center," she said. "I was an addict. Now I'm living a totally different life. I am on fire about recovery and helping other people the way I was helped."

Hancock, who works mostly with adolescents in the Sunflower Landing facility, said it is "so cool to watch the point of change come through" for the young people in the program.

Fairland, along with MSH and Hudspeth, are among the 12 DMH programs around Mississippi that depend on state funding to operate. A total of \$16.1 million in general funds was appropriated to DMH in fiscal



year 2016.

“You do make a difference,” Hudspeth director Mike Harris told the legislators. “You’ve heard one success story. There are thousands of them out there.”

Harry and Della Bain are another. Both were in the Intellectual and Developmental Disability program at Hudspeth when they met.

“We first got to grinnin’ at the fair a couple of years ago,” Della told the Galloway crowd. “We got to grinnin’ again at the barn dance.”

Soon thereafter, Harry asked Della to marry him. “I got down on my knees like a man should,” he said, drawing applause from the crowd.

Today, the couple has transitioned into the Hudspeth community living

program.

“I am in awe of and inspired by the people on this stage who shared their stories,” said Dr. James Herzog, a psychologist who serves on the Mississippi State Board of Mental Health.

Herzog, one of the speakers at the luncheon, mentioned some of health care-related initiatives that have recently come before the Legislature -- direct care series realignment, East Mississippi State Hospital receiving unit improvements and community expansion funds – and asked for the legislators’ support.

Shane Garrard, an honored guest at the luncheon, relied on that support when he entered Fairland’s drug and alcohol treatment program in 2001.

“I didn’t have a penny,” he said. “I begged them to take me.”

After completing the program, he got his life back in order and found his calling, taking a job as a Fairland counselor and working his way up to his current position, Director of Alcohol and Drug Services for DMH Region 1.

“I believe we give better care than any private facility can give,” Garrard said.

“When I believed I was unlovable, they showed me love. ... We give people a chance. Most people just need a chance. People do recover. It’s fantastic to see someone change their life like that.”

“Come see our programs in person,” MSH Director James Chastain, another speaker at the luncheon, told the legislators. “Let us show you what we do. I am encouraging you to visit.”



Mike Harris; HRC, Della and Harry Bain and Bel Ferguson; HRC Public Relations Director



Rankin County Cattleman’s Association Cooking Team



# SUN, FUN PREVAIL AT FARMER JIM NEAL GOLF CLASSIC

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



A bunch of nice prizes were handed out at the Farmer Jim Neal Golf Classic (FJN), and even those golfers who left the course empty-handed got a bellyfull of delicious food in the clubhouse.

The big winner, as always, in the annual FJN is the Friends of MSH, Inc. The tournament is the biggest fundraising event of the year for the hospital's volunteer organization.

The 14th edition of the FJN was played under sunny skies at Madison's Whisper Lake Country Club on April 8.

"We had beautiful weather, and the food was fantastic as always," said Sheila Shows, MSH Volunteer Services Director. "It's always nice to see familiar faces playing in the tournament again, and it was good to see some new players this year. All in all, it was a great day."

Food was provided by Valley Servic-



es, and prizes were donated by local businesses.

The winning team represented Alpha Graphics and included Chad Davis, Blake Lewis, Steve Brown and Ottis Spurgeon.

Second place was claimed by Bank-Plus (Joel Ross, Will White, Frank

Dulaney and Greg Stamatis) and third by Whisper Lake (Stephen Lum, Taylor McCombs, Terrell Porter and Kurt Abbey).

BankCorp South didn't place in the team competition but did bag a \$200 gift certificate to the Whisper Lake pro shop for winning the double eagle contest on the par 5 18th hole.

The longest drive on hole 18 went to Chad Davis, who won a \$100 gift certificate to Tico's Steakhouse. Bobby Dye cranked out the longest drive on the first hole and claimed a dozen Titleist Pro V1X balls.

On Hole 8, Frank Dulaney drained the longest putt and won a 40-inch Samsung TV.

Blake Lewis took closest-to-the-hole honors on No. 14 and Anse McLaurin did same on Hole 11. Both took home a C-Spire "mobile cooler," which included goodies from Everyday Gourmet and a Samsung Galaxy Note 5 Smartphone.

Closest to the hole on No. 9 earned Jim Jackson a Cattlemen 29-inch grill/smoker. Steve Lam won a five-drawer roller tool cart for getting closest to the hole on No. 4, and Steve Younger picked up skybox tickets to a Mississippi Braves game by hitting it close on No. 3.

There were two holes in one on the day: Bucky Sullivan on No. 6 and Mike Rosenthal on No. 8. Neither ace, however, came on a hole with a sponsored prize.

Proceeds from the tournament benefit Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc., the volunteer, non-profit organization that promotes

awareness of mental health issues and raises funds for projects that enhance the quality of life for patients and residents at the hospital.

The tournament is named in honor of the late "Farmer Jim" Neal, a Jackson radio personality and state legislator whose involvement with Mississippi State Hospital traces to the 1950s. On the airwaves for decades, he was a strong advocate of community service, volunteer work and charity. That spirit of service carries on in the FJN tournament.

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## MS. BOBBY JOHNSON RETIRES AFTER 42 YEARS OF SERVICE

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN

**B**obby Johnson's first job was at Mississippi State Hospital. She started as a Mental Health Technician, working C Shift on Building 73.

That was in 1974. Over the years, her job title changed, her hours changed, her building changed. The hospital itself underwent change.

Yet one imagines that Johnson has hardly changed at all, aside from the hint of gray hair. She retired on April 30, and as she reminisced recently about her 42 years of service at MSH, she displayed a gentle demeanor, a bright smile and an unflinching positive attitude – enduring qualities that surely served her well over her career.

"She's calm, caring ... a sweet lady. Very loving, and she really cares about her patients," said Virginia Lewis, a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner at MSH who has known Johnson for about seven years and worked directly with her on Build-

ing 203 for the last three. "Patients love her. They ask for her when she's not around.

"She is always very encouraging to her patients, but she stands her ground when she has to. We love that about her."

Beneath the easygoing exterior, Johnson is a diligent worker, a stickler for detail, Lewis said. Those, too, are qualities befitting a devoted health care professional.

"When she's doing something, it has to be done right," Lewis said. "If her name is on it, you know it was done right."

A Licensed Practical Nurse for the last 36 of her years at MSH, Johnson was part of the first nursing class trained on the MSH campus and completed the course work with the highest grade in the class.

Johnson, who was born in Florence and attended McLaurin High



School, says she was drawn to the health care profession because she had a lot of family members who

were sick when she was growing up. “I wasn’t skittish being around it,” she said. “I could help without getting overwhelmed.”

She helped too many patients to count over the past 42 years, devoting untold hours to the care of those in need, hard work she found rewarding in a pay-it-forward sense.

“You are doing something to help somebody else,” Johnson said. “You never know what might happen to you or your family members.”

There are many things she’ll remember about MSH, Johnson said. She has fond memories of one of her first supervisors, “Miss Ayers,” and of her nursing class graduation in the MSH Auditorium in 1980. She remembers how she accompanied patients for electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) treatments.

There were more patients and more operational buildings in her early days at the hospital, Johnson recalls,

and there were fewer doctors. Staff stayed busy.

“Everybody worked together,” Johnson said. “You didn’t have to look around for somebody to help you with something. Everybody pitched in. It really was like a family.”

Johnson said it was also important to her that lines of communication with the doctors were always open.

“I tell people this is a good place to work,” she said. “You’ve got the longevity. And they’re interested in what you have to say. Listening is a big thing.”

She hopes others will listen to what she has to say about dealing with mental health issues.

“Don’t make a snap judgement about someone,” Johnson said. “Treat a person the way you want to be treated. It could happen to you.”

Coworkers have described Johnson as “like a mother,” which she was when she started at MSH all those

years ago. Now she’s a grandmother, and she’s feeling a need to devote more time to that role.

“I’m getting older,” Johnson said of her decision to retire. “I’ve got some medical conditions. I want to visit my kids and grandkids and enjoy life while I can.”

She has a son, Ben, and a daughter, Benay, and four grandchildren, all of whom live in Tennessee.

While she’s leaving Mississippi State Hospital to spend time with family, Johnson is also leaving a family behind. Over the last 42 years, she has made many friends.

“Whenever I go on campus, I see somebody I know,” she said, breaking into a big grin.

“She’s friendly to everybody she meets,” Lewis said. “She’s just a sweetheart. We’ll all miss her.”

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## SPRING IS HERE



*Greg Smith, Johnny (Cos) Thompson, John Crockrell, Robert Bounds, Dominique Davis, Jim Pressey, Alan Means, Steven Morgan. Not Pictured: Anthony Lockhart and Louis Steen*



One of the benefits for an employee and the one thing most commented on by visitors is the beautiful campus at MSH. We salute the Grounds Crew and their tireless efforts to make the campus an oasis for us all!

# MSH MEDICAL STAFF HONORED ON NATIONAL DOCTORS' DAY

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



Mississippi State Hospital physicians, dentists and nurse practitioners were honored with a luncheon and gifted with umbrellas on March 30, National Doctors' Day.

"We do this every year as a show of appreciation," said Gene Amason, MSH Medical Staff Liaison.

MSH employs approximately 40 medical staff.

"I'd like to wish all the members of our medical staff a happy day and thank you for your continued service to Mississippi State Hospital," said MSH Director James Chastain, who attended the luncheon. "I appreciate that you choose to work here.

"We are fortunate to have a very good medical staff here, and you demonstrate those talents every day."

Dr. Robert Maddux, MSH Clinical Director, also thanked the staff for their hard work and the openness and honesty with which they carry out their duties.

"The most important thing is the excellent care you give our patients," Maddux said.

Dr. Duncan Stone, MSH Chief of Medical Staff, lauded the staff for the "amazing" work they have done in the face of personnel shortages.

National Doctors' Day is held every year on March 30 to celebrate the contribution of physicians who serve our country by caring for its citizens.

The first Doctors' Day observance was March 30, 1933, in Winder, Georgia. Eudora Brown Almond, wife of Dr. Charles B. Almond, decided to set aside a day to honor physicians. This first observance included mailing greeting cards and placing flowers on graves of deceased doctors.

In 1990, legislation was introduced and approved overwhelmingly in the House and Senate to establish a national Doctors' Day. On Oct. 30, 1990, President George Bush signed S.J. RES. #366 (which became Public Law 101-473) designating March 30 as "National Doctors' Day."

# HARRY O'STEEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



*Bill Bobbs; Friends of MSH Board, Holly Haralson; TRS Supervisor Jaquith Nursing Home, Chad Rommendale; Information Management and Thad Williams; Department of Mental Health served as coaches during the Harry O'Steen Golf Tournament on April 27. Twenty four patients participated with "Team Thad" winning the scramble format event.*

Mississippi State Hospital has a long association with golf.

What is now the Harry O'Steen Golf Course was designed in the mid-1950s by Jackson Country Club golf professional Nelson Giddens. It was originally a 9-hole layout but was shortened to accommodate patients who had limited time to play.

There was also an "indoor setup," according to a 1958 article in the State Times, a Jackson newspaper. Patients could hit balls into a canvas backstop or chip into a tub.

Jackson-area golf pros and players gave regular lessons to MSH patients in the '50s. Giddens, Norman Bryant of Colonial Country Club, Sonny Guy of the Municipal Golf Course and Bill Wright of Brookwood Country Club were cited in the State Times article as golf pros who visited the campus.

The 1958 article notes that local players Elaine Crystal, Marty Nelson, Mary L. Kuykendall and Martha Lynn Cook came three times a week to give golf instructions as part of a program that included "nearly 50" patients.

O'Steen was the impetus behind the golf program. He helped to maintain the golf course and bragged that it was as fine as any in the area.

He occasionally wrote a column for The Grapevine, a hospital newsletter that started in the 1960s. "Golf furnishes you the very best way to keep your mind busy and the fun and good physical exercise you get will be very valuable," O'Steen wrote in an April 7, 1966, column.

The Harry O'Steen Golf Tournament was started as a memorial following O'Steen's death in 1983.

The course is also used during MSH Day for a closest-to-the-hole competition.

## MSH'S PARKER VISITS STATE CAPITOL WITH EPILEPSY FOUNDATION

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN

Will Parker, a Programmer Analyst I in Mississippi State Hospital's Information Management Department, was among board members and supporters of the Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi who visited the state capitol on March 3 to advocate for Mississippians impacted by epilepsy.

"Legislative Advocacy Day is very important to the Epilepsy Foundation," Parker said. "I went to the capitol to advocate for the approximately 120,000 Mississippians impacted by epilepsy. This was a chance to meet our state legislators and thank them for funding and ask them to continue to fund the programs and services offered by the Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi."

Parker met specifically with Sen. Josh Harkins, who represents Rankin County.

Parker, recently honored by the Epilepsy Foundation with a Heroes Among Us award, volunteers as an inspirational speaker and shares his personal story on his PacingMyBrain.com web site.

Parker's other advocacy activities this year include being featured on the NeuroPace.com website with both a video and written account of his experience with the new responsive neurostimulation (RNS) treatment for epilepsy.

He was the first person from Mississippi to get this life-changing treatment.

Epilepsy is group of neurological diseases characterized by seizures. The Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi, according to its web site, leads the fight to stop seizures, find a cure and overcome challenges created by epilepsy. The foundation is "dedicated to the prevention and cure of seizure disorders, the alleviation of their effects and the promotion of an independence and optimal quality of life for people with epilepsy, through education, advocacy, research and direct client service."



*MSH Programmer Analyst Will Parker (second from left) is an Epilepsy Foundation of Mississippi board member.*

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## FORMER MSH DIRECTOR BLAKENEY DIES AT 84

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN

Joe F. Blakeney, who once called his five-year term as Director of Mississippi State Hospital "the best assignment" of his career, died on April 1 in San Diego. He was 84.

Blakeney served as MSH Director

from 1988 to 1993.

In a September 1993 press release announcing his retirement from MSH, Blakeney said, "I'm going to miss the daily association with this energetic, resourceful and dedicated

staff. State Hospital has a spirit that should be the envy of any hospital administrator."

Blakeney was born May 4, 1931, in Bay Springs. He received a bachelor's degree from Millsaps College

in Jackson and a master's in hospital administration from St. Louis University. He served a residency in hospital administration at Methodist Hospital in Memphis and worked for more than 28 years as a hospital administrator in the U.S. Air Force.

He started at MSH in 1983 as administrator of Whitfield Medical Surgical Hospital and became MSH Assistant Director under Jimmy C. Stubbs in 1984.

When Blakeney succeeded Stubbs as hospital director in 1988, he outlined five major goals:

- eliminate the hospital waiting list;
- expand community programs;
- improve the physical condition of patient buildings;
- attract and retain qualified staff (specifically, nurses); and
- apply for and receive accreditation

from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Administrations.

Under his watch, there was an expansion of the Chemical Dependency Unit services and the opening of the first adolescent unit, which became Oak Circle Center. Notable improvements were made to Buildings 33 and 90, among others, and the Shadow Oak Campground and fitness trail were constructed. WMSH received accreditation during Blakeney's tenure.

In the 1988 press release announcing his retirement, Blakeney said, "What has pleased me the most have been the steady improvement in the facilities and the increase in professional staff to provide better care for the patients."

Joint Commission accreditation for



the entire hospital eventually was received under James G. Chastain, who followed Blakeney as director.

Another legacy of the late director: The beige color, called CB6, that adorns the walls in many of the buildings on campus was personally selected by Blakeney.

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## LUCKEY NAMED MSH'S NEW POLICE CHIEF

BY JENNIFER GRAVES

Jeff Luckey, a 19-year veteran of the Mississippi State Hospital Police Department, has been named the hospital's new Chief of Police.

Luckey has served and protected patients, residents and staff at MSH since 1998 and graduated from the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy in 2000. Over the years, hands-on experience has taught him invaluable lessons that have prepared him for this important new role.

From an early age, Luckey was inspired by his family's legacy of service to MSH and the Department of Mental Health. He regularly visited campus and observed his grandparents, uncle and aunt in their professional roles here. His father, Norman Luckey, has worked for DMH

since 1974 and currently serves as Chief of Police at Hudspeth Regional Center.

Following his father's lead, Jeff Luckey would become an ideal candidate to succeed beloved Chief James Blackwell, who retired earlier this year after 41 years of service.

"MSH was home to Chief Blackwell," Luckey said. "This was his family and he loved the patients. He's a legend, and I'm honored to fill his shoes."

A graduate of Brandon High School, Luckey, 40, now resides in Simpson County on a 100-acre cattle farm inherited from his grandparents. He has been married to his wife, Julie, for 19 years and they have a 14-year-old daughter, Bella.



Luckey is a true "country boy" who enjoys outdoor activities such as farming, hunting, fishing and coaching his daughter's fastpitch softball team.



Therapeutic Recreation Services held a social at the Campground on March 25.



The Social Work Department hosted its second annual Resource Fair on March 24 in the Conference Center on Building 71 with a variety of social service and treatment programs participating.



March 13-19 was National Patient Safety Awareness Week during which MSH's Safety and Investigative Services Department recognized the hospital's Building Safety Coordinators.



MSH Director James Chastain (left), Friends Board President Bridget Lowery (center) and Friends Board member Bobby Stephens were in the cast of the Star Wars-themed promotional video for the 2016 Farmer Jim Neal Golf Classic.



Staff from the Medical Records Department were saluted during Health Information Professionals Week April 4-9.



Therapeutic Recreation Services sponsored a St. Patrick's Day Walk/Run through the streets of campus on March 17, drawing more than 200 participants.

## CONGRATULATIONS MARCH EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Janet Brown of Crystal Springs has been named Mississippi State Hospital's March Employee of the Month for Direct Care.

Brown, who graduated from Crystal Springs High School, is a Mental Health Technician in Inpatient Services on Building 36 and has worked at MSH for 9 1/2 years.

"Ms. Janet Brown is being nominated for employee of the month because of the many ways she provides care to our patients and support to fellow staff members," said Gerthania McGee, who nominated Brown.

"She is very hardworking and goes out of her way to make sure each patient receives what they need and is willing to assist in whatever way she is called upon. Ms. Brown embodies our core values. ... She is highly motivated, willing to assist in getting the job done and truly deserving of this recognition."



Obadiah D. Stokes of Jackson has been named Mississippi State Hospital's March Employee of the Month for Support Service.

Stokes, a Hinds Community College graduate and an LPN, is a Nurse Affiliation Coordinator in Staff Education and is based on Building 65. He has worked at MSH for 14 years.

"Obadiah Stokes has proven time and time again to be an outstanding employee," said Shircell Massey, who nominated Stokes. "Mr. Stokes serves as the Nurse Affiliation Coordinator but is often asked to assist with CPR, protective intervention, nurse education, CNA training, etc. He has been a jewel in the Staff Education and Training Department. Mr. Stokes willingly and successfully redirects frustrated employees that remember him from his time of service on the unit. ..."

"He is a hard-working, loyal, multi-tasking employee and is always willing to go the extra mile."



Kenitra Walker of Brandon has been named Mississippi State Hospital's March Employee of the Month for Clinical Service.

Walker, a Jackson State University graduate, is an Active Treatment Technician in the Psychology Department, working on Building 63. She has worked at MSH for 11 years.

"'Keke' has been instrumental in the implementation of behavior support programs on B-63," said Dr. Joseph Kastner, who nominated Walker.

"She accepts tasks that are assigned and carries them out without reservation. Keke has a special talent for this kind of work. First and foremost, she is kind and compassionate and genuinely cares about the patients. And the patients that she works with know that."

## CONGRATULATIONS APRIL EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Sylvester Huntley was named Mississippi State Hospital's April Employee of the Month for Clinical Service.

Huntley, who serves as pastor at a Brandon church, is a Pharmacy Tech serving all patient and resident buildings. He has worked at MSH for 21 years.

"Sylvester has worked as a faithful and reliable employee at MSH for many years," says Jordan Sutton, R.N., who nominated Huntley. "His bright, friendly personality makes employees and patients smile. He never complains about the heat, cold, rain or bad weather. ...

"He is a hard worker and much deserving of recognition for his dedication to this hospital."



Akila Moody was named Mississippi State Hospital's April Employee of the Month for Direct Care.

Moody, an alumnus of both Jackson State University and Alcorn State University, is a Mental Health Technician in the Inpatient Services Division working at Oak Circle Center. She has worked at MSH for 24 years.

"It is a great pleasure to have Ms. Moody work with the OCC patients in the school setting," says Melissa Hearn, an AT II who nominated Moody. "She is firm with the patients, yet she is able to make them feel safe and convey that she cares about them. ...

"The patients often ask her for advice and respect her. While at the school, I have seen new MHTs shadowing her. She is quick to tell them everything they need to know and doesn't mind sharing her experiences. ... She is everything one can ask for in a good employee."



Wilhelmina Washington of Pearl was named Mississippi State Hospital's April Employee of the Month for Support Services.

Washington, a native of The Netherlands, works in the pantry of Whitfield Medical Surgical Hospital. She has been employed at MSH for 9 1/2 years.

"If you were to look up MSH Core Values in an encyclopedia, it would likely say 'see Wilhelmina Washington,'" wrote Lee Varner, the WMSH Director who nominated Washington. "Ms. Washington does everything she does for the patients. (She) prepares food for the patients and then serves it. She has been trained as an MHT so she takes it upon herself to assist in feeding patients after food has been served. ...

"I have never heard of Wilhelmina saying anything negative toward another employee nor have I ever heard of anything negative toward her."