



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

Residential Staff Appreciation Day!

March 21 was a special day at Sunland! Centralized Support Services honored the residents who are employed within Sunland's vocational training worksites and community settings. A special program was hosted at the Suntown Mall to acknowledge and celebrate their individual achievements. Workers were presented with certificates of appreciation and special gifts, followed by refreshments and a time of fellowship.

Sunland appreciates the contributions our residents make to our vocational training programs and we applaud them for their dedication and hard work!



Residential Staff Appreciation Day!



From the Superintendent...

Hard Worker

Enthusiastic

Energetic

Punctual

These are just a few terms that describe the Resident Work Force at Sunland Center. Employment is an important part of the lives of the folks we are privileged to assist and lend support to. Working is so much more than earning money. It presents opportunities for residents to develop meaningful connections, gain greater independence, hone skills, and contribute to the larger community. We embrace a culture of inclusion. We firmly believe, with the proper supports, our residents can work in many work spaces.

Centralized Support Services, at an Employment Celebration for residents, spotlighted some of those areas (i.e., Farm, Culinary, Mall, Gymnasium, Theater, Maintenance, Recycling, Community Landscape, Janitorial Services). And, the stories from the supervisors and the residents who work are evidence of these productive contributions. Two examples. One from the Farm. Supervisor says, "James is a hard worker. He is the first person here everyday. He can do everything on the farm." Secondly, from the community, surveys demonstrate excellence in janitorial service and lawn beautification.

The employment landscape is richer with individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities. It is an opportunity for growth for everyone. Learning is so much more impactful. We strongly encourage our readers to add richly to your work space by giving an individual with an intellectual/developmental disability an opportunity to grow with your organization or company.

Sunland/DDDP/Rish Park staff members you continue to advance this important work that we are doing and highlighting employment is one of many endeavors that strengthen the path forward.

Honored to Serve with You,

Geri Williams
Superintendent

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Wednesday, March 7 was a special day for Floridians with developmental disabilities. During a meeting of the Florida Cabinet, Governor Rick Scott issued a resolution recognizing March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness month in Florida. Governor Scott said *"I'm proud to join the Florida Cabinet in recognizing March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in Florida. Our state is fully committed to supporting Floridians with developmental disabilities. We'll continue to work so every Floridian has the opportunity to live their dreams in our state."*

APD Director Barbara Palmer addressed the Governor and Cabinet, expressing appreciation for the Governor's steadfast support of individuals with disabilities. She stated *"APD works every day to meet the changing needs of the individuals that we serve."*

Superintendent Geri Williams, together with staff from Sunland/Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program, and Rish Park commend Governor Scott, the Florida Cabinet and Director Palmer for their support and dedication to the individuals we are all privileged to serve.

Several Sunland and DDDP staff were present to celebrate the signing of the resolution. All would agree it was quite an honor to witness this monumental moment.



Sunland Horse Show

The annual Sunland Horse Show took place on March 9 and was a great success. The event began with Autumn Mercer riding into the arena with the American Flag, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The first event was the Halter Class, followed by a short intermission with guest rider Johnny Neel demonstrating a variety of exercises with his horse, Hocus. Autumn Mercer and her horse, Hickory, performed an exciting demonstration where she laid the horse down. The second event was the Cloverleaf Barrels, followed by guest riders performing in Cloverleaf, Texas, and Hairpin Barrels. Much appreciation to our guest riders, Courtney Hitson, Johnny Neel, Karen Wagner, Amber Mercer and Autumn Mercer, for giving of their time and talent.

Congratulations to the following winners:

Halter Class: 1st Place Dan C., 2nd Place James G., 3rd Place Prentis M., & 4th Place James B.

Cloverleaf Barrels: 1st Place William R., 2nd Place Jerry S., 3rd Place Sherman T., and 4th Place James B.

Much appreciation to our Ranch staff who were the event organizers: Jerry Neel, Glenda Winkle, Courtney Hitson, and Recreation staff Matt Dryden, who emceed the event.



Contributed by: Courtney Hitson

Jackson County School Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

It is said that wearing green brings good luck, especially when worn on St. Patrick's Day. Irish folklore also says that mischievous leprechauns would pinch anyone not wearing green. In keeping with this age-old tradition, the Jackson County School Program at Sunland celebrated St. Patrick's Day in grand fashion, sporting their Irish green.

The students in Jennifer Grantham's class certainly enjoyed celebrating good luck, finding the gold at the end of the rainbow!



Easter Baskets Bring Lots of Smiles!

It is true that random acts of kindness bring an abundance of smiles. The love and kindness extended to Sunland from the ladies of the Altha United Methodist Church was certainly not a random act. Each year, these ladies provide Easter eggs for our residents. This year, they donated 900 plastic Easter eggs, filled with assorted goodies. The Recreation Department filled Easter Baskets with the eggs, delivering them to the residential homes on March 30. Everyone enjoyed the special treats, as you can see in their smiles.



Character Matters...



Availability ~ What does availability on the job mean? Basically, it is making your schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes or needs of those you serve. It is the willingness to change your schedule and priorities to meet a need. So, what does that look like on the job? Perhaps there is a need for a stay-over, to ensure adequate staffing during a shift. Or perhaps there is a special event or recreational activity for our residents. It is always imperative that we, as staff, adjust our own schedules and priorities so that our residents have opportunities to participate in events. We are here for them, and as such, we must ensure availability in our schedules to meet their needs.

AVAILABILITY

Making my own schedule and priorities secondary to the wishes of those I serve.

COMPASSION

Investing whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others.

Compassion ~ Did you know that compassion literally means to “suffer together?” We demonstrate compassion when we invest whatever is necessary to heal the hurts of others, and to help meet a need. Work environments that cultivate compassion create a much more positive and productive place to work. Compassion is an interpersonal process involving the ability to notice, feel, or perceive another person’s pain and to be with or take action to alleviate that person’s suffering. How might this character quality be displayed while on the job?

- Take greater notice of others’ psychological well-being. Speak kind words, lend support or a shoulder to lean on.
- Take on the perspective of the other person. Think about how the other person feels, and how you might be able to make a positive impact in their life.
- Encourage and display more positive contact among employees. Hold open a door, offer assistance. Any random act of kindness and every small interaction is an opportunity to have a positive impact in someone’s life.
- Be an example of a compassionate leader. The best leaders are those who lead from the heart, those who have the ability to inspire others through kindness, flexibility, support and empowerment. When you treat people with compassion, they never forget, and as a result, you develop people who want to work for you because you care.

Availability & Compassion - two important character traits. Let’s aspire to attain them!

March Star Awards!



Gold Star Team Award
Security - Orise Kendall & Carrie Deese
 Pictured: Doug Stone & Carrie Deese
 Not Pictured: Orise Kendall



Silver Star Award
Teresa Ellis, Unit 1
 Pictured: Felicia Smith & Teresa Ellis



Silver Star Award
Franklin Williams, Unit 1
 Pictured: Felicia Smith & Franklin Williams



Bronze Star Award
Faye Johnson, Unit 3
 Pictured: Bart Harrell & Faye Johnson



Gold Medal Team Award
Print Shop - Ashley Hill and Stephanie Parker
 Pictured: Ashley Hill, Stephanie Parker & James Godwin



Lifesaver Team Award
Unit 3 & Nursing
Melissa Harrell, Rochelle Glynn, Melissa Harrell, Daniell Moss, Krissi Satterfield, Jackie Hilton, Kristina Lenderman, Danielle Moss
 Pictured L-R: Bart Harrell, Jennifer Pumphrey, Rochelle Glynn, Melissa Harrell & Danielle Moss
 Not Pictured: Krissi Satterfield, Jackie Hilton, Kristina Lenderman



Gold Team Award
Recreation Department
Clint Cox, Matt Dryden, James Daniels, Johnny Hodges, Lee Cranford, Sabrina Johnson, Israel Davis
 Pictured L-R: Clint Cox, Lee Cranford, Sabrina Johnson, Johnny Hodges, James Daniels, Israel Davis
 Not Pictured: Matt Dryden



Gold Team Award
CSS & Quality Management
Pat Collins, Onna Lipford, Jimmy Conrad, DeRon Johnson, Michael John Carr, Keith Caplinger, John Payne and Jay Newsome
 Pictured L-R: Jay Newsome, Clint Cox, Jimmy Conrad, Keith Caplinger, DeRon Johnson, Michael John Carr and John Payne
 Not Pictured: Onna Lipford and Pat Collins

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All employees are required to take the new 2018 New PeopleFirst Navigation Update Training - Employee Version in the APD HR Training portal. To access training, go through the Sunland Intranet (the same location where you take your on-line PASS Coaching Tools) <http://sunland/> and click on APD HR Training. Enter your People First ID for the user name. Enter the last 4 of your social security number for the password. Click on the People First Login Domain. Then click on the blue login tab. Now you are in your training access. Click on "My Transcripts" and take everything indicated Incomplete. Make sure you register the classes in your "My Transcripts" to receive credit. Call us or just come to Staff Development and use our computer lab if you need assistance, 482-9135.

Remember, this is required training for ALL EMPLOYEES!



HUMAN RESOURCES

For any personnel needs, please contact Veronica Mullinax, Katey Hobbs, Lizzie Holland, Nicole Sims and Robin Morris at Sunland, and Debra Cone, Faith Bentley and Jodi Nesmith at DDDP. The HR Team is always happy to serve you!

For more information regarding personnel matters, the Sunland Human Resources Department can be reached at 482-9230 or *04. The DDDP Human Resource Team may be reached at 663-7738.

Information regarding vacancies can be obtained at the People First website at: <https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>

NEW EMPLOYEES



| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Nichole Ross | Tavarius Perry |
| Brittany Harmon | Tyra Jennings Pittman |
| Jahnice Jones | Mary Maciejko |
| Deborah Hughes | Lonnie Johnson |
| Kenoshia Gilbert | Dawn Melnik |
| Sandra Dover | Robyn Brewer |
| Lillie Tanner | Catherine Hamlin |
| Terri Nelson | Gregory Poythress |

Retirees

Bon Voyage!

Roger Cosson
Barbara Green
Vickie Maloney

Spring is in the Air at Sunland!

Spring is finally here after a long, cold winter. The days are becoming longer, the weather is warming up. Everyone welcomes the return of bluer skies, warm sunshine the trees turning green again, and the beauty of fresh flowers. Springtime at Sunland ushers in the natural beauty of the 500+ acres that make up this wonderful community.

The old adage "*stop and smell the roses*" comes to mind. It's really an expression not simply about flowers, but rather about how to live with a deeper appreciation of the world around us, reminding us to slow down and notice all the little things that make life worthwhile. So, *stop and smell the roses*...take time to enjoy the beauty of life...it's worth it!





agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

Project Sunland PRIDE



Beautification Program!

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT

"Community Spotlight of the Month"



Unit 1 Social Services

"The Sunland Beacon" - Newsletter Committee

Suggestions and/or news article submissions are welcome; please contact any committee member:

Beth Basford, Administration - Editor; Clint Cox, CSS/Recreation - Co-Editor; Stephanie Parker, CSS/Print Shop; Renee Perry, Unit 1; LaWanda Calhoun, Unit 2; Allison Jones, Unit 3; Juanita Alford, Pathways; Joni Laramore, Administration; Mary Gallagher, Quality Management; Suzanne Laramore, RN/Nursing-Medical