



The Sunland Beacon

FEBRUARY 2020

The Tim Tebow Foundation's Night to Shine marked its sixth anniversary Friday, February 7, 2020. This event has become an unforgettable prom night experience for people with special needs. The goal of this spectacular evening is to show honorees acceptance, inclusion and unconditional love. Night to Shine is held every year on the Friday before Valentine's Day. This year more than 700 churches took part in hosting events world-wide, where 110,000 guests were honored.

Residents and staff from all three residential Units and the Centralized Support Services department had the pleasure of attending the 2020 Night to Shine event at Hiland Park Baptist Church in Panama City, Florida. If you were to ask, chances are they would tell you the event is so much more than a prom. The atmosphere is warm, friendly and totally electric. Upon arrival, honored guests are treated to a royal experience that includes a walk on the red carpet and flashes of cameras from the paparazzi as they begin their special evening. After being crowned king and queen of the prom, honorees enjoy limo rides, dinner, music, dancing, karaoke and so much more.

Thank you to the staff of Centralized Support Services, residential staff and all others who were involved in coordinating Sunland's participation in the 2020 Night to Shine. Oh, what a night!

NIGHT to Shine

Night to Shine...Oh, What a Night!



From the Superintendent...

Saint Valentine was a priest who conducted marriage ceremonies in third century Rome. Claudius II, the emperor at the time, had the bright idea that men would make better soldiers if they were all single, therefore he banned marriage for young men. This prompted Valentine to strongly disagree, and rather than go along with the new law, the good-natured priest continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret. Of course, when Claudius II learned of the continuing ceremonies, he had poor Valentine killed.

It is not known for certain why we celebrate Valentine's Day in February, but the most popular theory is that February is the month in which Saint Valentine was killed. Two centuries after Valentine's death, Pope Gelasius became the head of the Catholic Church and decreed that February 14th should be Valentine's Day. During the middle ages, it was commonly believed that February 14 was the beginning of birds' mating season, which added to the idea that Valentine's Day should be a day for romance.

Valentine's Day messages became increasingly popular after the year 1400, and in fact, legend has it that Saint Valentine was imprisoned and sent a message to his lover signed "From your Valentine." If it's true, this would explain one of the most popular phrases seen on Valentine's Day cards today. In 1840's America, cards were being manufactured with lace, ribbons, and other pretty decorations. There are now approximately 1 billion Valentine's Day cards purchased each year, and 85% of them are bought by women!

Hope everyone had a fun, love-filled Valentine's Day!

See you around campus!

Marguerite

Marguerite Morgan
Superintendent



A DJ, a Dance & Love in the Air!

February is often referred to as the month of love. A time for Valentine's Day and remembering those we love. At Sunland, there's no doubt love was in the air just before Valentine's Day! Residents and staff filled the Gym at the annual Valentine's Dance to welcome back DJ, Derwin Hazelton, better known as Diamond D. Having fought an unexpected battle with cancer over the past year, Diamond D was also ready to get back to Sunland to see the special people he loves so much. According to Clint Cox, Recreation Director, this dance had one of the largest turnouts in recent years, with 98 residents and at least 50 staff in attendance.

Over the years, Sunland has been frequently gifted by Hazelton's generosity, so it's no surprise that Diamond D is Sunland's favorite DJ. He has provided the music for Sunland events every time he's been asked over the years, sometimes contributing his time and epic sounds five or six times a year for resident dances. We certainly appreciate Diamond D and are thankful he was able to return for the 2020 Valentine's Dance! The music, dancing and celebration of love made this a wonderful celebration for everyone!

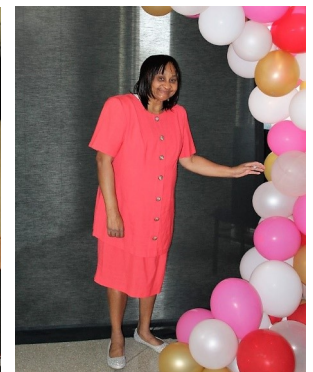
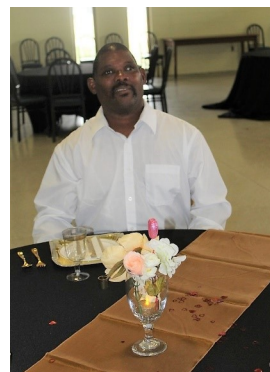
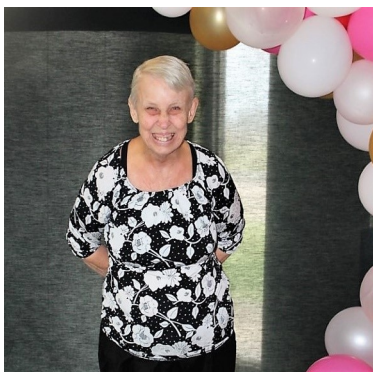




Unit 1 Group Therapy Celebrates Valentine's Day

Nothing can compare to a show of love than when friends come together for dinner and dancing. Unit 1 Group Therapy participants Frank B., Stanley D., Gaye G., Sammy P., and Britt W., along with their invited guests, recently gathered at the Mixer where they enjoyed an evening of dining and dancing to celebrate Valentine's Day.

Contributed by: Renee Perry



FUEL's Habitat for Humanity Food Drive

The Sunland FUEL (Faith Used in Everyday Life) Team recently sponsored a snack food drive, partnering with the Chipola Area Habitat for Humanity to collect snacks and beverages for volunteer work groups who donate their time to construct new homes in Jackson County. The FUEL Team was excited to deliver a large amount of supplies to Habitat on February 17. While there, they met Habitat Director Carmen Smith who thanked them for their hard work and compassion to help others in need. She talked to the group about the snacks and drinks they had collected and how these would be shared with the volunteers who come to Jackson County to help build new homes. The FUEL Team was happy to learn about the groups who will enjoy these refreshments, such as the RV Care-A-Vanners, who are here now, and also college students from the University of Arizona who will donate their time during Spring Break.

Chaplain Ruthie Moore and members of the FUEL Team send a huge thank you to everyone who supported this special food drive.



Pictured above are members of the RV-Care-A-Vanners who are donating their time and skills to build a new home on Booker Street in Marianna. Sunland's donations of snacks and drinks will be shared with these hard-working volunteers!



Unit 3 Celebrates Black History Month

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans; a time for recognizing the roles of many pioneers of U.S. history. Also, it is known as African American History Month. The event grew out of "Negro History Week" which was created in 1926 when historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History announced the second week of February to be "Negro History Week." Since 1976, every U.S. President has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month.

Residents and staff at Unit 3 Connally Manor hosted a Black History Month Program on Wednesday, February 19. The theme for this event was "Remembering The Past And Looking To The Future." During the program, Unit 3 staff showcased a variety of prominent African Americans. This was important, lest we forget the significant contributions of African Americans in various fields such as politics, science, law, literature, civil rights, art, and many more. Ms. Carol "Cookie" Marks provided a moving presentation of the "Creation." Local artist (and Sunland retiree) Ms. Lillie Clark stirred the crowd with an old Negro song fitting for the occasion. Mr. Al Johnson provided musical entertainment throughout the program. James Brown's classic "I'm Black and I'm Proud" landmark, groundbreaking song was especially enjoyed Connally Manor resident Cliff H. who loved every moment of it.

Thank you to our staff for their courage and bravery in organizing this program. They did an awesome job. The event was very inspiring and educational for all. *Honor – Remember - Inspire!*

Contributed by: LaRhonda Barnes, RT Supervisor, Unit 3



CSS Hosts Residential Staff Appreciation Day

On February 20, Centralized Support Services honored the residents who are employed within Sunland's vocational training and community setting worksites. Resident workers were recognized during a special awards program at the Suntown Mall where their individual accomplishments were acknowledged and celebrated. Supervisors from the vocational programs presented each individual with a certificate of appreciation and special gift. After the ceremony, everyone enjoyed a variety of refreshments and a time of fellowship with one another.

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



Alabama Bluesman a Fan Favorite!

In honor of Black History Month, Sunland Recreation hosted a musical celebration and concert on February 21 with Mr. Leon Atkins, aka Lil' Jimmy Reed, who is best known as the legendary "Alabama Bluesman." Atkins is a self-taught guitarist and harmonica player who has been entertaining since he was just 16 years old. He certainly has a way of connecting with his audience like no other. His signature style, old school downtown blues, easily resonates with people of all ages.

Sunland residents and staff have enjoyed concerts by the Alabama Bluesman for several years. His energetic shows are very entertaining and quite interactive. It's a given that his concerts at Sunland will have attendees singing, dancing or playing air guitar to their favorite tunes. Without a doubt, the Alabama Bluesman is an all-time fan favorite at Sunland!



JCS Program Celebrates February Fun!

The Jackson County School Program (JCS) at Sunland celebrated the month of February with a host of fun activities. On February 13, JCS students were treated to a Valentine party by the Sneads High School Student Council. Student Council members visited each classroom and assisted with Valentine crafts, ending the day with a party where everyone was treated to assorted refreshments. Much appreciation to JCS Administrator Phyllis Daniels, JCS teacher Jennifer Grantham and Traci Cloud from Sneads High School for organizing this activity!

On February 18, JCS students took a field trip to the Citizens Lodge Park in Marianna. Students from Chuck Nolen's class, Jennifer Grantham's class and Janet Baxley's class were excited to visit the park. While there they walked out on the gazebo dock to see the fish. Afterwards, the group gathered under a pavilion with Jackson County Parks Director, Rhett Daniels, for photos and refreshments. We hear a future trip is in the works so students can fish at the pond!



JCS Black History Celebration

The Jackson County School Program at Sunland hosted a Black History Month Celebration on February 28. The program was educational, engaging, and a lot of fun for the students and staff. Throughout the event, students learned about the many contributions of George Washington Carver, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and many others who made a great impact on American history.

The highlight of the day included a dance party featuring many Motown artists such as Aretha Franklin, Kool and the Gang, Smokey Robinson, The Commodores, and so many more. Special thanks to Mr. Chuck Nolen, the Sunland Teacher of the Year and in-house DJ for organizing this event! The residents and staff alike had a BLAST! In the words of JCSS veteran teacher Jennifer Grantham "this goes down as one of our Best. Times. Ever!"



It's All in a Day's Work!

While helping out at my old "stomping grounds" on a windy February morning, I glanced out the press room window and there she was...wind racing through her hair and clouds of black toner spinning around her body, totally enveloping her with black ink toner. I couldn't believe my eyes. I raced to the front door and called out "what are you doing?" With that big Stephanie smile, she answered "dumping out the waste toner cartridge!" It seems the replacement cartridges had not come in. If you know about printers, you know they do not run when the cartridge is full. I ran to the back of the Print Shop, gathered some towels and handed them to her. We laughed and laughed together. We knew that the job must go on and Stephanie sure wasn't going to let a little thing like a full waste toner cartridge, or toner covering her from head to foot, defeat her production deadlines! For Stephanie Parker, no job is too big or too small. As a matter of fact, the Sunland Print Shop has greatly expanded its customer base beyond the gates of Sunland. The Print Shop provides printing and design services for many individuals, businesses, churches and organizations within the local and surrounding communities. For Stephanie, it's all in a day's work! Way to go Stephanie...and by the way...you clean up good, girl!

Contributed by: Maria Johnson



The Print Shop at Sunland Center



Staff Participate in 2020 LEAD Summit

Several Sunland staff participated in the 2020 LEAD Summit held at the Florida Capitol February 5 - 6. The annual event is hosted by the Florida Commission on the Status of Women. This event provided attendees a great opportunity to renew acquaintances, meet new friends, State legislators and others who serve in the Florida Legislature. The 2020 LEAD Summit celebrated Women's History Month and educated attendees about the Florida Women's Suffrage Centennial Celebration. While there, participants from around the state were able to speak out in a public forum on issues affecting their communities. They were also educated on leading community advocacy and were able to meet with legislators in small groups. During the Women's History Month luncheon, the group heard from Tallahassee Mayor John Dailey, Deborah Tannenbaum, Deputy Commissioner of Agriculture, and Laurel Lee, Secretary of State, followed by Marian Johnson of the Florida Chamber Political Institute.

Representing the Agency for Persons with Disabilities and Sunland Center were: Shandrell Mount, Registered Nurse Supervisor; Rose Crews, Director of Nursing; Felicia Smith, Unit 1 Program Operations Administrator; Beth Basford, Communications/Public Relations Coordinator; Tiffany LaCount, Residential Services Director, Unit 1; and Corliss McGriff, Residential Services Director, Unit 1.



Congratulations February Star Award Recipients!

The Employee Recognition Program sends a huge shout out to employees who were recognized with a Star Award during the month of February 2020! Pictured below are award recipients from Unit 1, Unit 2, Accounting, Centralized Support Services and Security.

Employees not available for pictures: Desmond Barnes, Janice Brown, Brenda Spencer, Tanya Woods, James Chaney, Robert Summers, Shanta Richardson, Charles Yon, and Michael Roesler



STAR AWARD

Stacy Reed, Unit 1 Adams House

Pictured: Corliss McGriff, Unit 1 RSD; Stacy Reed, Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent



STAR TEAM AWARD

Unit 2 Lincoln House, 2nd Shift

STAR AWARD

Desmund Barnes, Unit 2 Lincoln House

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Charles Harris, Lincoln House RSS; Phil Anderson Unit 2 RSD



STAR AWARD

Debra Johnson, Sunland Accounting Department

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Bruce Gambill, Accounting Director; Debra Johnson, Kendra Weeks, Accounting Cashier & nominator of award



STAR AWARD

Ruthie Moore, Chaplain

Pictured: Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent; Ruthie Moore, James Godwin, CSS Director



STAR TEAM AWARD

Security Department

Pictured: Doug Stone, Security Chief; Casey Winfree, Andrew Johnson, Marguerite Morgan, Superintendent
Not Pictured: Robert Summers, Shanta Richardson, Charles Yon, Michael Roesler

TRAINING REQUIREMENT FOR ALL STAFF!

The agency recently transitioned to a new Learning Management System (LMS). All employees are required to take the ten mandatory Human Resource trainings that have been uploaded into the LMS.

You may have taken some of these trainings when you were initially hired at APD. However, to ensure that your training records are current and accurate and that all employees are in compliance with the Agency's training schedule, the Agency requires all employees to retake the mandatory trainings.

You may notice that some of the trainings in your account have overdue notices that are many days past. Please disregard these dates. The dates are based on your effective hire date and/or the date that the training was originally created.

All employees are required to complete the mandatory trainings by **Tuesday, March 31, 2020.**

Please contact your departmental supervisor or Human Resources if you need assistance.



HUMAN RESOURCES

Sunland's Human Resource Team is always happy to serve you! For any personnel needs, please contact Veronica Mullinax, Katey Hobbs, Lizzie Holland, Nicole Sims, Robin Morris or Lisa Rabon. The HR department can be reached at 482-9230. Information regarding vacancies can be obtained at the People First website at: <https://peoplefirst.myflorida.com>



**WE ARE
HERE
TO HELP**

NEW EMPLOYEES

Crystal Spurlock
Regina Coley
Ma Joanna Torres
Reginald Leslie
Erin Gillette
Tisha Jackson
Jimmy Lyons
Carey Barfield
Sylvia Richardson
Lillian Lenderman

William Peters
Christopher Gillette
Caitlin Shackelford
Jasmine Suggs
Kimberly Camardella
Erica Olds
Clarissa Montgomery
Tiffany Womack
Laura Poppell

Welcome Aboard!