



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

"Where Do You Find Meaning in Your Work?"

As 2017 drew to a close, Superintendent Williams posed Sunland's theme and team challenge for 2018 ~ **"Where do you find meaning in your work?"** The question is quite thought provoking. What exactly does it mean to find "meaning" in your work? The question certainly encourages personal reflection. Why am I here? What do I want to accomplish? What does this job mean to me? Better yet, what does my work mean to others...especially, the people I'm here to serve?

Maybe it means finding your "breakthrough moment" ~ that moment of opportunity and possibility when you discover why you're doing what you're doing, and what you want to give back to the world. Maybe it's identifying and then embracing your purpose. As you ponder the question, you'll discover that finding meaning and purpose is really an evolving and ongoing practice. Adam Smiley Poswolsky who authored "The Quarter-Life Break-Through" writes about inventing your own path, finding meaningful work, and building a life that matters. He says *"finding meaning in your work involves the act of beginning to commit to something you care deeply about, something that provides personal meaning to you and allows you to share your gifts."* If you think about it, you'll understand the meaning and purpose that you find in your work is the difference between making a living and making an impact. Let's make an impact!

Consider these quotes...how do they challenge your thinking, and how might they impact your work?

"We were created for meaningful work, and one of life's greatest pleasures is the satisfaction of a job well done." ~ John C. Maxwell

"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do." ~ Steve Jobs

"Work gives you meaning and purpose, and life is empty without it." ~ Stephen Hawking

"For, in the end, it is impossible to have a great life unless it is a meaningful life. And it is very difficult to have a meaningful life without meaningful work." ~ James C. Collins

We encourage your consideration of Sunland's 2018 theme and challenge... **"Where do you find meaning in your work?"** Are you up for the challenge? Brighter days await those who find purpose and meaning in their work. And for that, our lives and the lives of those we are privileged to serve, will be all the richer.



To do meaningful work is to
contribute – to create value in society.

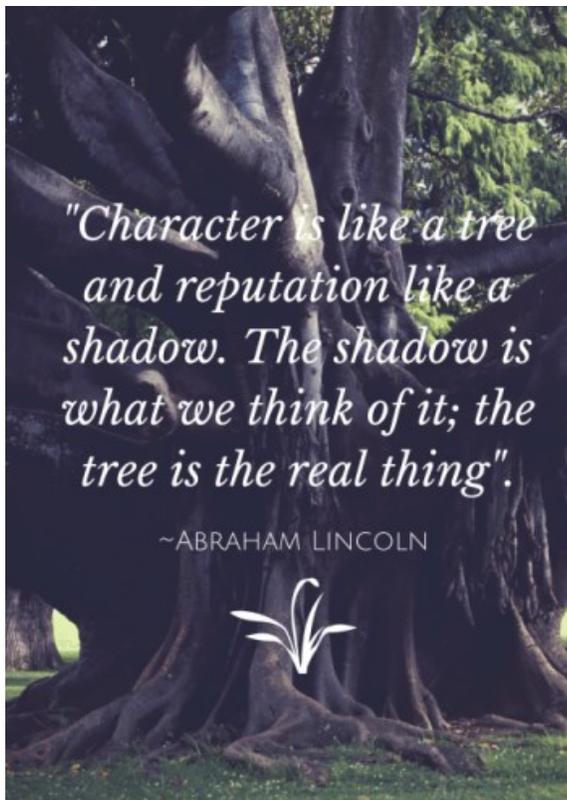
Charles Koch

Character Matters...

Character, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is one of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual. Character, defined simply, is the way someone thinks, feels and behaves. It's been said that our character is defined by what we do when we think no one is looking. Dale Carnegie once said, "Be more concerned about your character than your reputation. Your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are." Given these definitions, why does character matter? Consider the following:

Good Character...

- ◆ Attracts the trust and respect of others.
- ◆ Allows you to influence others.
- ◆ Changes your perspective about failure.
- ◆ Sustains you through difficult times and/or opposition.
- ◆ Improves your self-esteem, self-respect and confidence.
- ◆ Creates a foundation for happy, healthy relationships.



How do we attain good character? It starts with defining our values, integrity, behavior, and how we react to situations we confront on a daily basis. Our character is fundamental in shaping how we interact with the world, who we engage with, and how we act and make decisions.

Sunland's Star Award Program consistently recognizes and celebrates the positive character traits exhibited by our employees. As we journey through 2018, the Beacon will highlight a variety of character qualities. We'll explore how we can cultivate these qualities in our daily lives, personally and professionally. Applying these truths to our lives, we will find that unity within the community of Sunland is strengthened. Why is this important? Because, character matters.

Good character has a positive impact in our lives and to those around us. Especially to the individuals we are privileged to serve.

During 2018, let us all strive to cultivate positive character qualities in our lives!

Character Matters...

Alertness ~ *Always being aware of people and circumstances so that I can have a right response to them.*

Being alert on the job is a very significant character quality, especially when caring for the developmentally disabled. This is most important to ensure their safety and well-being.

An example at Sunland that requires staff to remain alert on the job is wandering. Wandering, also called elopement, is an important safety issue that sometimes affects people with disabilities. Wandering occurs when someone leaves a safe area or responsible caregiver. This can happen very quickly, even when an individual is under constant supervision. Some of the reasons a person may wander include: enjoyment of running or exploring; getting to a place he or she enjoys; to get out of a situation that causes stress; or simply to go see something that captures their interest. All of these scenarios warrant that staff remain alert at all times. It is our duty and responsibility to ensure the best interest of our residents.

ALERTNESS

**Being aware of people
and circumstances
so that I can have
a right response to them**

DILIGENCE

**Pursuing a task
until it is finished well**

Diligence ~ *Focusing my attention on the work at hand and pursuing the task until it is finished well.*

Being diligent on the job requires commitment; being willing to stay with a task or duty until the job has been completed. It requires focus. This is an important character trait in any line of work, and especially when providing care for the developmentally disabled. It is easy to become distracted in a setting that often times involves unexpected interruptions or changes.

Being diligent to complete the task at hand may not always be easy, but it is always the right thing to do. Diligence is a work ethic that is often exhibited by someone who is known as being a hard-worker, conscientious, determined and dependable.

Alertness and Diligence - two important character traits. Let's aspire to attain them!

From the Superintendent...

At the close of 2017, this question was posed to the Sunland/DDDP/Rish Park Team: *Where do you find meaning in your work?* This is an important question. It begs an answer.

Research shows that employees want to know that they are making a difference and they want more meaning and purpose. Yes. They want more money, too. As importantly, they want the work to mean something. Employees are encouraged to give their very best daily. And, supervisors, managers, and leaders are encouraged to inspire, motivate, and acknowledge with frequency the hard work done consistently by the most compassionate and caring staff on planet earth. We are fortunate to have on our staff seasoned employees who have committed to working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for over 40 years. Four decades is a long time to serve in one field of work.

Recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics suggests, "The average worker today stays at each of his or her jobs for 4.4 years, but the expected tenure of the workforce's youngest employees is about half that." We are very fortunate to have employees invest the span of their active lived experience in this work community. Imagine the richness of their wealth of knowledge. The true benefactors of their knowledge, skills, and talents are the people whose lives they touch at Sunland Center, Developmental Disabilities Defendant Program, and Rish Park.

Leadership is anxiously awaiting answers to the question: *Where do you find meaning in your work* from our seasoned employees and those just starting the journey doing this important work. Responses are rapidly making their way to pen and paper and will soon be published. What a way to infuse the learning community by sharing from those doing the work. After all, they are the experts on what they do and how it impacts the work environment. Looking forward to what we will learn.

Stay tuned!

Grateful,

Geri Williams
Superintendent



Leadership Retreat

The Sunland/DDDP leadership teams attended a Leadership Retreat on Thursday, January 25 at the Rivertown Community Church/Community Center. Guest speaker for the event was Paul Smith. He addressed the topics of "Why Work Matters," "How Will We Work Together," and "Investment Thinking." Feedback from the group was phenomenal and on-point. The presentation was engaging, and the energy positive. Hats off to Paul Smith and the RCC team for their commitment and investment in building strong, livable communities, and strengthening leadership within the business communities.



Service Awards

Sunland's semi-annual Service Awards Ceremony was held on Tuesday, January 23 at the Mixer. A total of 48 staff having attained 5-40 years of service with the State of Florida were honored during the event.

The following staff were honored:

5 Years: Carol Clemmons, George Deming, Shawanda Garrett, Deron Johnson, Deron Pittman, Corey Smith

10 Years: Stephanie Curry, Keith Jarrett, Samuel McKay, Paul Money, Ed Smith, Dorothy Staley

15 Years: Annie Balcom, Beth Basford, Delores Bowens, Monika Boykin, Robert Chambliss, Verdia Dixon, Kevin Edwards, Kendrick Gardner, Melody Green, Carolyn Harvey, Lennart Lindahl, Jr., Michael Padgett, Mary Parson, Tyrone White

20 Years: Dawn Alday, Chephus Granberry, Letha Henry, Maurice Myrick

25 Years: Derek Blanks, James Chaney, Lillie Johnson, Jennifer Pumphrey, Judy Sims, Merry Warren, Arletha Williams, Wayne Winkle

30 Years: Michael John Carr, Tondelayo Clemons, Jennie Ann Dean, Wanda Keel, Carolyn Merritt, Aaron Pittman, Gloria Roulhac, Gail Spears

35 Years: Davan Baker

40 Years: Lucretia Harlow

Following the ceremony, a reception was held for the honorees and their guests, co-workers and supervisors.

5 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Phil Anderson for Carol Clemmons, George Deming, Shawanda Garrett, Deron Johnson, Deron Pittman
Not Pictured: Corey Smith

10 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Stephanie Curry, Allen Ward for Keith Jarrett, Chephus Granberry for Samuel McKay, Paul Money and Dorothy Staley
Not Pictured: Ed Smith

Service Awards

15 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Kendrick Gardner, Bart Harrell for Annie Balcom, Lillie Johnson for Delores Bowens, Kim Lindahl for Lenny Lindahl, Chephus Granberry for Monika Boykin, Robert Chambliss, Mary Parson, Allen Ward for Kevin Edwards, Verdia Dixon, Phil Anderson for Carolyn Harvey, Tyrone White, Michael Padgett, and Heather Poythress for Melody Green - Not Pictured: Beth Basford

20 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Jennifer Pumphrey for Dawn Alday, Chephus Granberry, Christina Berrieum for Letha Henry, and Maurice Myrick

25 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Arletha Williams, Derek Blanks, Lillie Johnson, James Chaney, Jennifer Pumphrey, Merry Warren, Wayne Winkle, and Judy Sims

30 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Gloria Roulhac with her husband, Victor
Not Pictured: Michael John Carr, Tondelayo Clemons, Jennie Ann Dean, Wanda Keel, Carolyn Merritt, Aaron Pittman, Gail Spears

35 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Tondelayo Clemons and Maurice Myrick for Davan Baker

40 Years of Service



Pictured L-R: Lillie Johnson for Lucretia Harlow

Special Olympics

The Jackson County Sonics traveled to Tavares, Florida recently to take part in the 2018 Special Olympics Florida North Region State Basketball Championships. The tournament was held at The Big House. The Sonics took part in a three team battle for the Traditional 5 on 5 Division Two Title.

The Sonics found the going rough in the first half of Game One, taking on a very athletic team from Marion County. Things didn't get any better in the second half when the Sonics leading scorer fouled out of the game. In the Sonics' second contest, the game was much closer, with the Sonics leading by one point at the half. In the second half though, the squad from Pinellas County rallied to post an 11-point victory over the Sonics.

Taking part for the Sonics from Sunland were Jon R., Arnaldo M., John B. and James C. Two community players were on the team as well and they were Anthony P. and Franciose P. The head coach of the Sonics was Israel Davis (Recreation Department). Other staff traveling with the team were Recreation staff Clint Cox, Matt Dryden and Mary Herring, RN.



Contributed by: Clint Cox

January Star Awards!

Star Awards for the month of January were presented on Tuesday, January 30. Award presentations were made by Deputy Superintendent Adrian Abner, along with Franklin Williams, Unit 1 Residential Services Director; Phil Anderson, Unit 2 Residential Services Director; Clint Cox, Recreation Director; and Tony Speights, Supported Employment/Vocational Trainer II Supervisor.



**Gold Star Award
Naton Williams, Unit 1**

Pictured L-R: Franklin Williams, Tracy Swint accepting award on behalf of Naton Williams, and Adrian Abner



**Silver Star Award
Edward Perry, Unit 2**

Pictured L-R: Phil Anderson, Susan Byers accepting award on behalf of Edward Perry, and Adrian Abner



**Silver Medal Award
Pat Collins, Centralized Support Services**

Pictured L-R: Clint Cox, Pat Collins, Tony Speights and Adrian Abner



**Silver Medal Team Award
Centralized Support Services - Mobile Work Crew
Christopher Kelly, Deron Pittman and Brandon Sims**

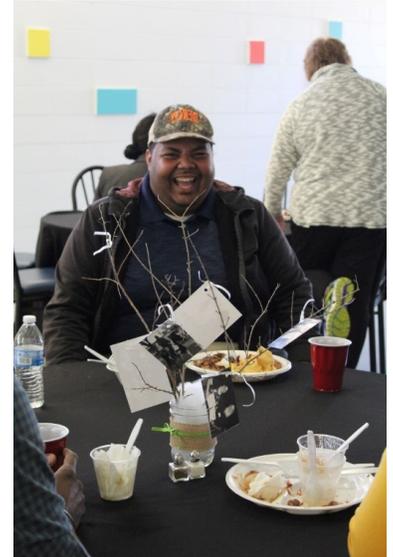
Pictured L-R: Tony Speights, Clint Cox, Brandon Sims, Deron Pittman and Adrian Abner

Sunland's 2017 Star Department of the Year!

On Wednesday, January 31, Sunland Administration and the Sunland Employee Recognition Committee hosted a grand celebration to honor the staff of Centralized Support Services (CSS), who were recognized as the 2017 Star Department of the Year. Staff were treated to a catered BBQ luncheon, complete with pulled pork sandwiches, baked beans, coleslaw, potato salad, chips and cheese dip, followed by peach cobbler topped with vanilla ice cream.

Honorees enjoyed their meal, fellowship with their co-workers, and the table décor which featured black & white photos highlighting CSS activities throughout 2017.

Congratulations to CSS! Recognizing the hard work and contributions of our employees is very important. During 2017, CSS recognized an astounding 49% of their staff with well-deserved Star Awards. Sunland honors CSS for their active participation in the Employee Recognition/Star Awards program!



Celebrating CSS!



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Tax season is upon us! With that in mind, during the month of January Sunland's IT Department provided a series of email with interesting and helpful resources that can help with avoiding identify theft.

What should you do if you think your Social Security number has been stolen? Or, what if you get a letter from the IRS saying more than one tax return was filed in your name, or that IRS records show wages from an employer you don't know?

Call the IRS Identity Theft Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490. If you are a tax identity theft victim, the IRS may give you a personal PIN number to verify your identity and protect your file going forward.

Learn more about tax identity theft at ftc.gov/taxidtheft and irs.gov/identitytheft. Visit IdentityTheft.gov to report identity theft and get a recovery plan.



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



- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Margaret Blackmon | Shante Lovett |
| Courtney Hitson | Alexandria Self |
| Shantrell Brown | Cynthia Henderson |
| Johnathan Jones | Chanel Jackson |
| Juli Donofro | David Godwin |
| Janetta Peters | Andrew Johnson |
| Kenneth Baker | Jeremy Skipper |
| Stephanie Lee | |

Retirees

Bon Voyage!

Lynette Scott



agency for persons with disabilities
State of Florida

Project Sunland PRIDE



Beautification Program!

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT

"Community Spotlight of the Month"

Live Oaks at Administration Building



"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