

A Message from the Executive Director

Once again I am overwhelmed and humbled by the kindness and compassion of the MDHS staff. During the recent "Lock Up" for Muscular Dystrophy, I was able to raise more than \$1,850. Meeting some of the children affected by MD who were also working the fundraiser, I can assure you that your contributions are for an extremely good cause.

The hearing before the Joint Legislative Budget Committee went very well. We really do not have any indication of what state agency budgets will look like due to the pending vote on Proposition 42 in the November election. Should this initiative pass, it will have a dramatic effect on the state budget potentially resulting in cutbacks in non K-12 education agencies including MDHS.

I am proud to announce that Mississippi is among the six states with the highest percent of timely processed SNAP applications during Fiscal Year 2014. In addition, Mississippi is recognized by the USDA as one of the states with the most improved Program Access Index. These accomplishments are on top of our recent recognition in the SNAP/CAPERS Rate and Payment Accuracy Rate categories. This is the first time in the history of the food assistance program that one individual state has earned bonus funding in ALL FOUR categories of the High Performance Bonus System in a single year! Congratulations to Cathy Sykes and Team Field Operations for a job extremely well done! Your success is unprecedented.

Continued on page 2

Jailbirds unlocking a cure for muscle disease



Do a little time. Do a lot of good.

September 24 at the Mississippi Department of Human Services State Office, Rickey Berry, executive director, was "arrested" to support Muscular Dystrophy Association. He has currently raised more than \$1,850, and that number continues to grow.

While jailbirds are only "locked up" for one hour, the loss of mobility that occurs when muscles stop working — and the limitations on freedom and independence the disease can cause — are for life.

Continued on page 2

In this issue:

- SHIP & SMP Working Meeting and Presentations Held
- Paint it Purple for Alzheimer's Awareness
- Active Shooter? What should you do?
- Training Calendar
- And much more!

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Thanks to you for your patience during the trying times that we had with WORKSITE. While the project to upgrade the system is far from complete, the system seems to be stable without the down time that we have been experiencing. We will maintain our "all hands on deck" approach until we are completely satisfied that field staff has the best work tools available. Thanks to the MIS team and BCS Systems, Inc. for your attention to this matter.

Public Catalyst continues the interview and information gathering process for the evaluation of the Division of Family & Children's Services. DFCS staff is doing an excellent job of remaining focused at their tasks on hand while we go through this process. We have recently issued an Invitation for Bids (IFB) to try to get you some help with the home study component of the Resource Home Licensure process. We also continue to move forward in the development phase of a new SACWIS system.

We are in the process of expanding our leadership program. Charlie Smith and staff are working with the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), a local university and the State of Tennessee to strengthen the core content as well as the accessibility of our program. We also continue to work with nSPARC at Mississippi State University on both short term and long term computer system projects to make us operate even more accurately and efficiently.

I read an interesting quote the other day and shared it with the executive staff at our division directors meeting Tuesday morning. It goes something like this, "When you lose sight of your vision, you are lost." Our vision, mission and purpose is to serve our clients. We are not lost. On the contrary, we are focused and moving forward each and every day.

Rickey Berry
Executive Director

This is how it works:

When business and community leaders participate as a jailbird in a Lock-Up for a Muscular Dystrophy Association event, critical funds are raised to fight muscle diseases – unlocking hope for a world free of muscular dystrophy.

Coworkers, family and friends are invited to make donations toward "bail."

Mr. Berry said, "Believe it or not, I'm going to jail and I need your help. While it's not a real jail, it's even more important as I'm raising money to help children and adults with muscle disease in my community who are supported by the vital work of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I might not be able to rely on good behavior to get out, so that's why I need your help—I need you to donate to my bail! I know that together we'll MAKE A MUSCLE and MAKE A DIFFERENCE in the fight against muscle disease."



For more information:

To donate, go to www2.mda.org/site/TR/Lock-Up or call 800-572-1717.

MDA Lock-Up
Muscular Dystrophy Association

Do a little time. Do a lot of good.

Make a Muscle. Make a Difference.



The Beacon

For information or to submit articles for the Beacon:
Email: mdhs.communications@mdhs.ms.gov
Mail: MDHS, Office of Communications
PO Box 352, Jackson, MS 39205-0352

SHIP & SMP Working Meeting and Presentations Held



Pictured from left: Wade Holland, Three Rivers AAA; David Manasco, Southern MS AAA; Michell Singleton, Southwest MS AAA; Georgia Pitchford, South Delta AAA; Angie Branch, North Central AAA; Mamie Avery, North Delta AAA; Sharon Duke, Golden Triangle AAA; Stephanie Womack, United Way of East MS; Jessica Rowan, Northeast MS AAA; Kathy McKeithen, Central MS AAA; Jo Ann Adams, East Central AAA; and MDHS, Program Administrator Brandon Davis. Not pictured, Jason Larry, Central MS AAA and MDHS, Program Manager Penny Burns.

The Division of Aging and Adult Services held a “working meeting” for staff of the State Health Insurance Assistance Program and Senior Medicare Patrol at the Embassy Suites in Ridgeland Aug. 26-27.

SHIP provides free one-on-one counseling to Medicare beneficiaries. The SMP provides outreach and education on health care fraud. In addition, the SMP receives tips and complaints of suspected errors, fraud and abuse of the Medicare program. Staff for both programs work through the 10 Area Agencies on Aging throughout the state.

Guest speakers for the event included: Treasure Tyson, Mississippi Office of the Attorney General; Bernadette Alway and Jason Reed, Jackson division of the Federal Bureau of Investigations; Penny Burns and Brandon Davis, MDHS, DAAS; Marlene Franklin, Lisa Smith and Jerlin Parks, Mississippi Division of Medicaid; Ryan Blakeney and Bob Williams, Mississippi Department of Insurance; Travis Camp and Patricia Harper, Camp Insurance Agency, Hattiesburg; and Barrie Carpenter, Social Security Administration.

Training was followed by awards and recognition of SHIP and SMP coordinators and state SHIP support organizations for their hard-work, invaluable efforts and contributions serving Medicare beneficiaries.

If you know of anyone with a question about Medicare or is in need of counseling assistance with their health plan, contact Mississippi SHIP at 1-800-948-3090.



A certificate of appreciation was presented to the Mississippi Industries for the Blind. Above Joe Spicer from the agency was on hand for the presentation. Not pictured was Joyce Tucker and Herbert Humphrey.

Paint It PURPLE

The Division of Aging & Adult Services encouraged everyone to wear purple Friday, Sept. 18 to raise awareness and show support for people with Alzheimer's disease and the loved ones who care for them.

In 2012, there were 925 deaths attributed to Alzheimer's in the state and currently there are more than 51,000 Mississippians with the disease. By 2025, it is estimated that more than 65,000, a 27 percent increase, will suffer from this debilitating illness. Many times, the forgotten number behind this suffering, is the number of caregivers, which in 2014 were estimated at 205,000 with a value of unpaid care of \$2.8 billion.

Many of us have a family member or friend with the disease. Support efforts for research to end Alzheimer's. We appreciate the many employees and offices across the state who participated in this effort.



Tishomingo County DFO



Montgomery County DFO



Harrison County DFO



State Office

Paint It PURPLE



Region 4 North, Division of Field Operations recently held its regional meeting in Starkville and participated in the annual Citywide Tailgate celebration. Proceeds from the event go to the United Way. In addition, many MDHS employees wore purple in support of Alzheimer's Awareness Day.



Active Shooter? What should you do?

We've seen the news. Workplace, school and public shootings are all too common. Knowing how to respond may save your life.

Responding appropriately may help to save your life and the lives of others during an active shooter situation.

RUN

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Keep your hands visible.

HIDE

- Hide in an area out of the active shooter's view.
- Block entry to your hiding place and lock the doors.
- SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONE.

FIGHT

- **As a last resort** and only when your life is in imminent danger.
- Attempt to incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression and throw items at the shooter.

CALL 9-1-1 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.

When law enforcement arrives:

- Remain calm and follow their instructions.
- Immediately put down any items in your hands and raise hands and spread fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers.
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling.

Do not stop to ask the officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which the officers are entering the premises.

Information to provide to law enforcement:

- Location and number of the victim(s) and shooter(s).
- Physical description of the shooter(s).
- Number and type of weapons if known.

An active shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area, typically through the use of firearms. Victims are usually selected at random. You should always know your nearest exits in any facility you visit.

Your response may save your life and those around you.

Mark your calendars!

The Division of Family & Children's Services, Prevention Unit will host a booth at the Trademart during the Mississippi State Fair. The fair runs from Oct. 7-18. Be sure to stop by and greet our MDHS volunteers while you enjoy the festivities.

October 15 at 10:15 a.m. is the Great Shake-Out for earthquake awareness.

October 28 at 9:15 a.m. is the statewide tornado drill.

In November, DFCS will observe National Adoption Month. This collective effort raises awareness of the more than 100,000 children in foster care across the U.S. who are waiting on permanent and loving families. DFCS will join other agencies to host a celebration for current and prospective foster parents Saturday, Nov. 14 at the Mississippi Agriculture & Forestry Museum. The annual event is sponsored by MDHS, Southern Christian Services for Children & Youth, Inc., Mississippi Children's Home, Mississippi Families for Kids, Catholic Charities and Youth Villages. For more information, contact Lynda Robinson at 601-354-0983.

DFO Training Spotlight



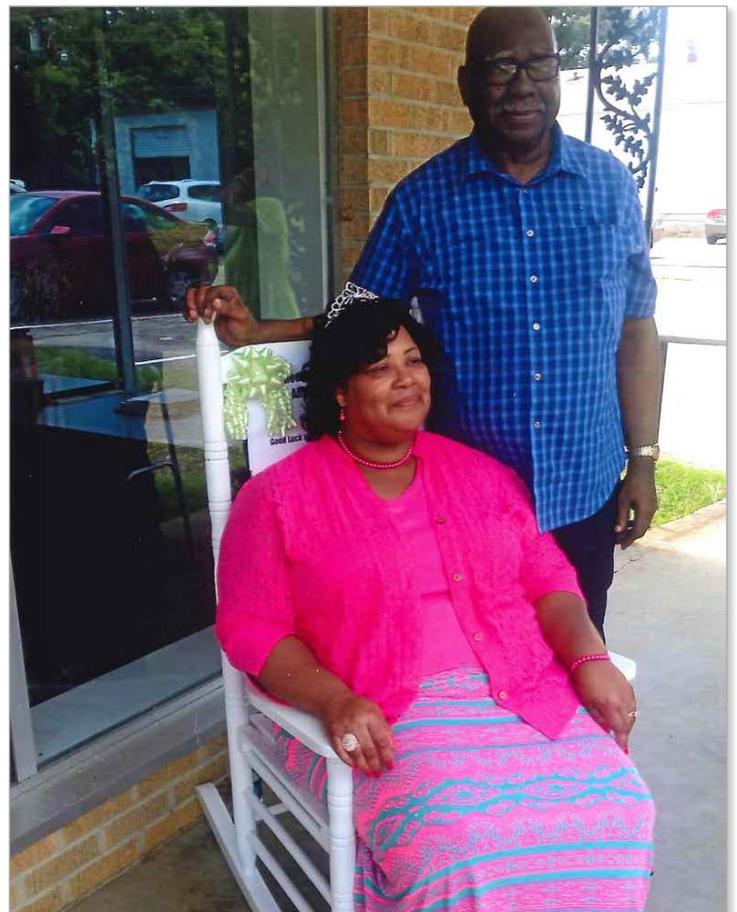
The State Office recently welcomed child support enforcement officers and eligibility workers from across the state to Jackson for training. These frontline employees represent the "face of MDHS" to Mississippi residents who come to county offices for assistance. We appreciate the division's diligent work to train and maintain quality staff.

Certificate of Appreciation to Nguyen

A certificate was presented to Thu-Thuy Nguyen for her **Over and Beyond** dedication to Hinds County Child Support Financial. Thank you for your service!



Retirements



Alfreida Knight, Adams County Resource Area Social Work Supervisor, retired from the agency with 27.25 years of service. A retirement celebration at the Adams County Regional office was held to honor her tireless work with families and children. She is shown above with her husband, Luther. Congratulations!

Eat Healthy for a Strong Heart



Samantha Lambert, MS, RD, LD, Clinical Dietitian, Nutrition Support Services, Mississippi Baptist Health Systems.

Did you know you can eat your way to a stronger, healthier heart? In a recent meeting held at the State Office, Registered Dietitian Samantha Lambert from Mississippi Baptist Health Systems shared information on how we can reduce many risk factors associated with stroke, heart disease, diabetes, blood pressure and cholesterol.

Mississippi Fast Facts

Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease and stroke, is the leading cause of death in Mississippi, accounting for more than a third of all deaths in the state.

More than 700,000 Mississippi adults have high blood pressure and at least one in six Mississippians have high cholesterol.

In 2012, the state ranked second in the nation for overall diabetes prevalence with more than 276,000 Mississippians having Type 2 diabetes. Diabetes was the cause of death for 1,039 residents during the year.

Preventive Health

Lambert shared how many of the risk factors for stroke can be reduced through diet and exercise. Increased incidence is noted for individuals with high blood pressure and cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes and smoking.

Studies show that a diet low in sugar, saturated fats, sodium and saturated fat can help achieve better health.

Many resources are available to help make better food choices and include choosemyplate.gov. The site has tips for weight management, physical activity, calorie counters and much more.

At the meeting, Lambert also shared how to make better choices when dining out including asking for salad dressings to be "on the side" and for breads to be served with the meal rather than before.

Recipes and other tips for a healthy lifestyle were also discussed as Lambert passed around model representations of five pounds of fat and lean muscle (see photo, on the table).

Training Opportunities

Orientation:

- Oct. 13, Lee County
- Oct. 20, Jasper County
- Oct. 22, Pike County
- Nov. 19, Winston County
- Dec. 8, Forrest County
- Dec. 14., State Office
- Dec. 17, Oakley YDC
- Dec. 17, Harrison County

Cultural Diversity:

- Oct. 15, Oakley YDC
- Oct. 27, Harrison County
- Nov. 17, DeSoto County
- Nov. 19, Forrest County
- Dec. 10, State Office

Sexual Harassment

- Nov. 12, Winston County
- Dec. 16, Forrest County

Ethics/Professionalism

- Dec. 1, State Office

Conflict Resolution

- Oct. 29, Oakley YDC

Customer Service

- Nov. 5, Leflore County

Training opportunities are available for current MDHS employees. These classes are provided at no charge.

Register for classes through MELMS

- >Go to www.dfa.ms.gov.
- >Click on the ACE access link.
- >Enter your ACE ID and password.
- >Click on the MELMS Student Center on the MELMS tab.
- >Click on the class registration link.
- >Scroll to DHS.
- >Click on the link "Open to all DHS employees only."
- >Scroll to the class you would like to register for.

For additional information, contact Sandra Herring, Training and Staff Development supervisor at 601-359-4394 or sandra.herring@mdhs.ms.gov.