



mdcps

Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services

THE WAY FORWARD

Protecting Children and Nurturing Mississippi Families

July 2016

MDCPS Hosts “New Beginnings” Leadership Conference

MDCPS staff from all over the state gathered June 28-30 in Jackson to attend a conference focused on new beginnings. Commissioner Chandler gave the opening address and started the conference off with some words of inspiration. Breakout sessions were held over the three day event and included topics such as: “Using Data to Lead the Change” and “Building Community Support for Success”.



Directors from each “Champion Region” did an outstanding job explaining what it means to represent the agency in this capacity as well as outlining how they will achieve goals and exceed expectations.



MDCPS’ senior staff received a warm welcome at the “New Beginnings” Leadership Conference.

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THE WAY FORWARD

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“Office of the Month” Trophy Travels I-South

Wade Williams, Regional Director (RD) of I-South, has recently elicited a friendly competition among his staff, located across an eight county region in north-east Mississippi. Wade drew inspiration from the Walter Weathers Award and credits that motivation for sparking the creation of the “Office of the Month” award. He was looking for a way to recognize the exemplary work his employees do in I-South, while also boosting morale.



Pontotoc County Receives “Magnolia”



The first recipients of this prestigious award were the dedicated workers of Pontotoc County. As the inaugural county, the responsibility and honor of naming the illustrious silver cup was also bestowed upon Pontotoc County. They responded accordingly, choosing to call the trophy “Magnolia” after the great state we serve.

At left are Wade Williams presenting “Magnolia” to Area Social Work Supervisors (ASWSs), April Kitchens, Andrea Hill and Kelly Fleming.

“Magnolia” Visits Calhoun County

The most recent beneficiary of the “Office of the Month” award was Calhoun County. Pictured at right is Patti Young, ASWS, proudly accepting “Magnolia” on behalf of her county from RD, Wade Williams. Wade proclaimed that Calhoun County was chosen as this month’s awardee due largely in part to Patti’s helpful spirit and giving nature.



Wade describes Patti and her Calhoun County staff as always willing to assist other counties when needed and went on to say that they are the first to volunteer, often before even being asked. Wade also reported that Calhoun County has made notable progress in the areas of Prevention and Custody and he felt strongly that they deserved to be recognized for their exceptional work and attitudes.

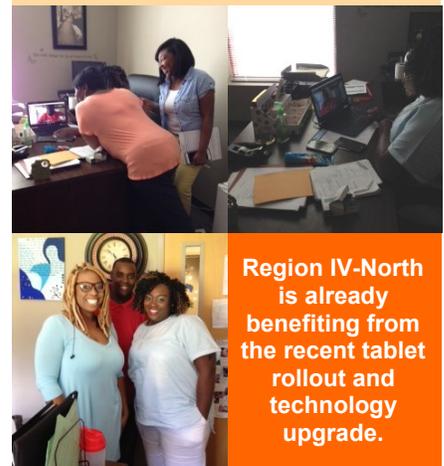
MDCPS is proud of the phenomenal leadership exemplified throughout I-South. We encourage you all to continue to think progressively and make forward strides! We believe in you!

Technology Update: Tablets in Action

Latoya Taylor, Area Social Work Supervisor (ASWS) and LaPatrick Stephens, Family Protection Specialist, (FPS) have enjoyed utilizing their new tablets in Region IV-North.

During a recent home visit, LaPatrick was able to communicate with his supervisor via Skype on his tablet. (Skype is an instant messaging technology that allows its users to both hear and see one another simultaneously.) LaPatrick conveyed how reassuring it was to have his supervisor available through this technology. The supervisor’s video chat presence offered her the opportunity, in a sense, to attend the visit with LaPatrick.

LaPatrick and his co-worker, Tyeisha Moore, FPS, have also experienced “skyping” office to office in order to more effectively connect and brainstorm over similar cases they share. They both expressed their excitement, knowing these new practices will enhance MDCPS’ services and efficiency.



Region IV-North is already benefiting from the recent tablet rollout and technology upgrade.

This is the way we row! USE YOUR "O.A.R.!"

At the June Leadership Conference, MDCPS Directors Regina Lacking, Wendy Bryant, and Viedale Washington presented the theory of forward movement propelled by your "O.A.R."

- ◆ Take OWNSHIP
- ◆ Be ACCOUNTABLE
- ◆ Accept RESPONSIBILITY



"If you are not rowing towards something, you will drown not having tried."

"While I was thrilled to receive the Lookin' to the Future award, I really felt like everyone else in the room really deserved the recognition," said

First Lady Deborah Bryant.

"The social workers and foster parents are the ones making a difference daily in the lives of our children, and we can't thank them enough for what they do every second of every day."

First Lady Receives Award for Her Work in Promoting Child Literacy

First Lady Deborah Bryant along with several MDCPS staff recently attended the 28th annual Lookin' to the Future Conference presented by Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth, Inc. (SCSCY). The purpose of this three day event was two-fold explained SCSCY's Executive Director, Debbie Dobbins. It provided professionals and foster parents with the opportunity to

learn how care for at and youth also and ener- Each day were able keynote well as breakout sessions child related



to better risk children in a way that motivates gizes them. participants to listen to speakers as attend workshop on various welfare topics. The

First Lady has been busy traveling the state, reading to children, and hugging each and every one, but she found some time on Friday, June 17th, to accept this year's Lookin' to the Future Award. SCSCY and MDCPS agree that what the First Lady does for the children of Mississippi is truly important work, and we thank her for her relentless hard work and dedication.

Pictured left to right are MDCPS Deputy Commissioner of Administration, Kristi Plotner, First Lady Deborah Bryant and MDCPS Deputy Commissioner for Child Welfare, Tracy Malone.

Team MDCPS at the Governor's 5k



Governor Phil Bryant hosted his annual “5k Run For Health” in downtown Jackson on June 30th. Over 600 participants registered to support Blair E. Batson’s Children’s Hospital, almost 100 with Team MDCPS! Collectively the event raised over \$28,000 while also encouraging both mental and physical health. We hope you will all plan to join Team MDCPS next year!

Lunch with the Regional Director

Regional Director (RD), Regina Lacking, recently held a luncheon for her staff. Hot pizza and cold drinks commended Region III-South’s successful registration drive for the Governor’s 5k! Regina plans to continue to host monthly “Lunch with the RD” events in order to nurture unity among the staff.

Regina also believes that if we continue our efforts to celebrate small successes we will foster a greater sense of purpose and reignite the passion for the work we do. The more engaged we feel, the more, in turn, we will be able to fully engage our children and families, which speaks clearly to taking Ownership, being more Accountable, and definitely demonstrating greater Responsibility!



Way to use your “O.A.R.” III-South!



Farewell, Dr. Anna Lyn Whitt

State Office staff gathered to wish Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources, Dr. Anna Lyn Whitt, well as her last day was July 8th. While Anna Lyn’s talent and drive will be sorely missed, MDCPS looks to the future and the reorganization of the Human Resources Division under Kristi Plotner, Deputy Commissioner of Administration.

MDCPS will sustain the progress we have made and we are continually moving forward with the ultimate goal of ensuring the protection of every child in Mississippi. Best of luck in your future endeavors, Dr. Whitt!