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The publication of the BRC Bulletin is made possible by contributions from our dedicated and talented employees. The articles and pictures were written, taken and formatted by BRC employees. Their contributions are greatly appreciated! We sincerely hope that you enjoy this edition of the Boswell Regional Center Bulletin, November 2016 Issue.

Boswell Regional Center Bulletin

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A Publication for Employees, Family and Friends of BRC

The Annual Fall Festival was held on November 3, 2016, on the campus of Boswell Regional Center. The festivities began at 5:00 p.m. at Green Park with action packed wrestling. Boswell Regional Center thanks The Arc of Mississippi for sponsoring the live wrestling matches for our individuals and staff to enjoy. Everyone was entertained, that's for sure! There was yelling, clapping, and finger pointing all throughout the crowd as folks cheered for their favorite wrestlers. This event was a time where campus and community came together as one and enjoyed a night of fellowship.

A few other activities included football toss, target golf, balloon artist, sand art, face painting, water pong, hula toss, and solo cup knock down. The aroma of butter popcorn and funnel cakes soared throughout Green Park as people patiently waited in line to acquire these delicious treats. There is so much hard work that goes into making this event a success, and it would not be possible if we did not have such dedicated staff. A special thanks goes to Lisa Westbrook for coordinating the event and gathering nice door prizes.









Message From Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health



The 2017 Regular Session of the Mississippi Legislature will begin on Tuesday, January 3, 2017. Our legislative work picks up immediately after we return from the holidays at the end of year, and both the holidays and the session will be here before we know it.

There are several dates related to the session that state employees may want to keep in mind as we move forward. The first of those is Monday, January 16. That will be the deadline for the introduction of general bills and constitutional amendments. On or shortly after that day, we will know the majority of the bills that will be introduced during the session and what bills will affect DMH and state employees.

The next major deadline will be Tuesday, January 31, which is when the House of Representatives and the Senate must pass bills out of their respective committees. After this deadline, we will have a much more clear idea of what bills may become law. Once approved by the committees in each chamber, the bills must be approved by the full membership of their chamber. That deadline for passage of bills by the full membership is February 13.

I want to make sure our employees have a good understanding of the legislative process, but I also do not want to overwhelm anyone with details. Generally speaking, once a bill has been passed out of its original chamber's committee and approved by its full membership, it will be sent to the other cham-

ber and go through the same process of committee approval and then full membership approval.

The deadlines I have referenced above apply to general bills and constitutional amendments, but not to revenue and appropriations bills. Those bills, including the DMH appropriations bill, have their own deadlines for committees and full approval. The deadline for introducing appropriations bills is February 22.

Our legislative priorities for the upcoming session will be very similar to last year. We will once again be asking legislators to consider realigning the salaries for our direct care series of employees. The information that we shared with you and with them last year has not changed. Our direct care employees have incredibly difficult jobs, and we want to make sure they receive compensation that is in line with the challenges they face.

We will also be asking legislators for funding to continue to expand the ID/DD Home and Community Based Waiver. This program has been instrumental in helping people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live successfully in the community.

We will be sharing more about the legislative session next month. In the meantime, do not hesitate to ask us or the staff at your programs if you have any questions.

Thank you to everyone for your continued dedication to serving our fellow Mississippians. I hope you and your families enjoy the coming holidays, and I look forward to a new year and all of the work I know we can accomplish in it.

Sincerely,
Diana Mikula
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Mental Health

Spotlytt on Luvenma Banks



Luvennia Fletcher-Banks resides in Magee, MS where she lives with her husband Jammal Banks. Luvennia and her husband are active members of Goodwater CME Church where she serves as Secretary, the Young Adult Committee, and Pastor's Aide Committee. Luvennia recently joined the Boswell Regional Center Family in June as the Internal Auditor. She came to Boswell with 14 years of Financial Banking experience. Luvennia earned an Associates Degree in Accounting from Jones County Junior College. She then received her Bachelors Degree in Accounting from Strayer University in Jackson, MS. This was followed by two Master Degree's: Business Management and Human Resources. When asked what she liked most about Boswell, Luvennia stated "she loves the care that is shown and given to the individuals and the opportunities that are provided for them to be independent." She is also thankful for the BRC staff welcoming her aboard to Mental Health. Some of her hobbies include: reading, shopping, attending her husband's basketball games, and of course spending time with family, friends, and church family.

Meet The Supervisor

Greg Grantham

Years of Service: 3

Hire Date: August 1, 2013 Resides: Mendenhall, MS

Favorite Color: Red Favorite Team: Saints Favorite Food: Seafood

Favorite Restaurant: Half Shell Oyster House

Favorite Vacation Spot: Jamaica

Favorite Music: Gospel

Favorite Song: I Pray We All Be Ready

I am thankful for the opportunity to serve the individuals here at BRC.

I am grateful to be amongst an amazing group of staff that works together, and forms an amazing team that is always willing to lend a helping hand. Every day is different and can be quite a challenge, but the support that I receive makes my job a lot easier.



Perry Williams

Perry Williams received Wal-Mart's Associate of the Month for September.





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2016 Heart Expressions Exhibit Shines Brightly in Brookhaven

So many visitors made the comment: "The colors just make me smile!" Boswell artists brought joy to many people who visited the 2016 Heart Expressions Art Exhibit hosted by The Lincoln Lawrence Franklin Regional Library in Brookhaven, Mississippi. The November month-long exhibit featured the artwork of Mr. K. Loggins as well as 190 artwork of 80 other Boswell artists.

Comments such as these were common: "These cheerful paintings would be nice in a doctor's office" or "I wish the students in our schools would paint happy paintings with colors like these." Words like "beautiful", "inspirational", "wonderful", "amazing" and "joyful" were frequent. These positive words are not surprising considering that the art itself is produced while the artists are listening to calming classical or folk music.

Each painting represents at least one hour of brain therapy, friendly and intelligent conversation with the teacher, appropriate touch, vocabulary building, occupational therapy, color and beauty, and expression of the soul. During one week when the lesson dealt with drawing and painting circles, the subject was a big bright yellow smiling sunshine wearing sunglasses. Not a single artist participated in this activity without smiling back at that sun while they painted it.

In a featured display outside the exhibition room, Mr. Loggins' framed work caught the attention of many. His art ability is so advanced that he attends a VSA/Community Artist Group class taught by artist Tom Harmon and assisted by artist Carrie Roebuck. Each Tuesday afternoon in Jackson at the Mississippi Art Center, Mr. Loggins attends class with other fine artists who have various disabilities (such as stroke and cancer recovery, hearing impairment, and mental illness). Mr. Loggins is accompanied by Rec. Therapist, Brittany Walker and Claire Bevell, BRC Director of Expressive Arts, who assists him with his lessons. Mr. Loggins and his work was recently featured in an article in *The Source*, the annual magazine published by *The Magee Courier*.



Mr. Loggins stands next to some of his displayed art. An attorney bought "Ballerina Bow" (above) for \$100. Mr. Loggins' art is now on exhibit at the MS Art Center in Jackson for the Community Artist Group Exhibit there.

2016 Heart Expressions Exhibit Shines Brightly in Brookhaven

....continued

On the morning of November 15th, two art instructors from the Mississippi School for the Arts in Brookhaven (on the old Whitworth College Campus), Ms. Kelly Walters and Mr. Maurice Calvert, along with two of their senior art students, Whitney Baker and Taylor Guntharp, walked over to judge the art. The judges also came over on the morning of November 14th to do a preliminary study of the art. Their decisions after much deliberation were as follows:

- *Grand Prize/\$75---K. Loggins for "Sail Past the Mountains"
- *First Prize/\$50---A. Thornhill for "Italian Landscape"
- *Second Prize/\$30---C. Parker for "Papa Rooster"
- *Third Prize/\$20---S. Little for "Autumn Day"
- *Judge's Purchase Award/\$100---F. Dunn for embroidered pillowcases
- *Honorable Mention awards were given to A. McLemore for "Snowscape", D. Herrington for "Leaping Lady", S. Konshak for "My Flag", D. Howell for "Autumn Flame", E. Thomas for "Magnolia" and B. Landrum for "Cardinal in the Snow".

On the evening of November 15th, BRC hosted a reception in the library for the 2016 Heart Expressions art competition and for the public. Ms. Sheila Bryant served punch and cookies while Kathy Pittman pictures. Direct Support Professionals and Supervisors transported 9 of the 11 winners to the exhibit on short notice and assisted them during the reception and awards ceremony. Ms. Cindy Womack, BRC Assistant Director, also attended and assisted.

We are so grateful to the LLFR Library for providing this lovely venue for this exhibit. The art exhibit was also supported by publicity, assistance in set-up, and reception refreshments by members of BRAG, Brookhaven Regional Art Group. Funds for the cash awards were provided by a donation from BRC Friends and Family Association and a generous donation of \$100 from Ms. Kelly Walters for the Judge's Purchase Award. BRC cookbooks and pottery were also available for purchase as well as the paintings at the very nice Lincoln Lawrence Franklin Regional Library throughout the entire month of November.

Anyone interested in seeing, exhibiting, or purchasing art from the Boswell Regional Center should contact Claire Bevell at 601-867-5120.







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Senior Projects

By: Rhegan Cockrell



My name is Rhegan Cockrell, and I am a senior at Simpson County Academy. Every year, seniors are required to complete a senior project in order to graduate. For my senior project, I chose to learn about Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities.

According to Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDDs): Condition Information, and Intellectual Disability- Center for Parent Information and Resources, "Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities are limitations in mental functioning that is present at birth that can affect a person's emotional, physical, or intellectual development and multiple body parts or systems." I found this to be a fascinating topic because many individuals of Boswell Regional Center attend my church, as well as, their Director, Steven Allen.

Throughout the summer, I had the opportunity to complete roughly forty hours at Boswell learning about IDD. During those forty hours, I learned that the awareness of IDD is limited. I had never heard of it before hand myself. Volunteering at Boswell over the summer was a blessing. I learned how the simplest of actions can make a person's day. On November 3, 2016, Boswell Regional Center held an annual

fall festival on campus. I was able to attend and witness the individuals having the time of their lives, and I will never forget the amazing experience. People with IDD will leave a lasting impression on a person's heart; I guarantee it! As a tradition at Simpson Academy, seniors always use a quote to end their presentation, even though, they probably won't remember it as they exit the room. However, mine will always be remembered. Martina Navratilova stated, "Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone."

Autism

By: Kallye V. Smith



When tasked with completing a senior project, the topic of autism wasn't on my mind. I do have an interest in learning more about autism because I have family members on the autism spectrum. So, after learning about Boswell Regional Center and the autism program there, I decided to choose this topic. While working on the project, I was under the leadership of Ms. Lisa Bryant. I participated in training sessions, toured Boswell, and interacted with the individuals. I learned so much under Ms. Bryant's mentorship, and I wouldn't trade this experience for the world. Even though I learned a great deal, I know that I've only scratched the surface in learning what the autism spectrum truly is. I may have completed my senior project, but I intend to continue to be a part of Boswell Regional Center.

I plan to continue helping with raising awareness for those who are on the autism spectrum because this experience has really opened my eyes to people's individual characteristics.

BRC Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving dinner was held Tuesday, November 22, 2016, in the big kitchen. The evening began with Bro. Rudy Jackson leading everyone in prayer. The decorations were beautiful! The Autumn leaves and sprigs set the tone as staff began to serve dinner to each individual. Everyone could smell the dressing, rolls and pies as they entered the dining area. Mr. Steven Allen, Director of BRC, stood in the center of the room and said, "Do you all know what holiday we are celebrating? Correct, Thanksgiving. Do you know what I am thankful for? You!" Everyone was all smiles as they sat down and again bowed to prayer lead by S. Pratcher. The fellowship with one another was amazing.



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Dream Haven Thanksgiving



MAC Thanksgiving





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Dream Extreme Thanksgiving

On Thursday, November 17, 2016, Day Services had their annual Thanksgiving lunch. Participants from Dream Makers and Connections met at Dream Extreme for the delicious meal. Preparation for the meal began on Tuesday, November 15, with the final touches being put together Thursday morning. The tables were set, the food was displayed, and everyone anxiously awaited the meal. Mr. Tabor blessed the meal. The Thanksgiving meal consisted of: turkey or ham, collard greens or green beans, dressing, chicken and dumplings, homemade macaroni and cheese or sweet potatoes, cornbread muffins or rolls. For dessert, they had a choice of pecan pie, sweet potato pie, sugar free low calorie cake, or low sugar apple cobbler. To drink, there was a choice of tea, kool-aid or water.

Afterwards, everyone stated that they were full and really enjoyed the meal! Dream Extreme participants enjoyed seeing and spending time with their friends from Connections and Dream Makers.

Special thanks to all who pitched in and helped in preparing, serving, cleaning, and cooking. It was greatly appreciated and so are you!





Bass Pro Shop Outing





VDisney TripY



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BRC Orientation Classes

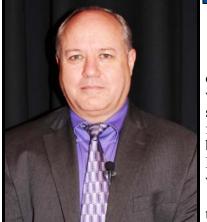


November 1st Orientation: Back Row Left to Right: Maryetta Batiste (Pinelake), Karen Boles (Employment Services), Alana Anderson (Oakbrook), Asia Barber (Floater), Dasha Gray (Simpson Cove), James Grubbs (Ridgeview) Front Row Left to Right: Danielle Hayes (CS-State Farm), Latorsha Burrell (Success), Erica Hubbard (Nutritional Services), Daisha Williams (Pinelake), Lawanda Williams (Ridgeview), Sandra McCollum (Magee Autism)



November 16th Orientation: Back Row Left to Right: Tommy Thornton (Maintenance), Brandi Hanna (Employment Services), Kimberly Warren (Pinelake), Amanda Kemp (Pinelake), Amber Toney (Floater), Tiffany Sims (Pinelake) Front Row Left to Right: April Thurman (Oakbrook), Rachel McDonald (Human Resources), T'Lynndia Crain (Pinelake), Shania Green (Pinelake)

Pastor's Corner



Bro. Rudy Jackson, BRC Chaplain

It is gratitude that prompted an old man to visit an old broken pier on the eastern seacoast of Florida. Every Friday night, until his death in 1973, he would return, walking slowly and slightly stooped with a large bucket of shrimp. The sea gulls would flock to this old man, and he would feed them from his bucket. Many years before, in October, 1942, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker was on a mission in a B-17 to deliver an important message to General Douglas MacArthur in New Guinea. But, there was an unexpected detour which would hurl Captain Eddie into the most harrowing adventure of his life.

Somewhere over the South Pacific the Flying Fortress became lost beyond the reach of radio. Fuel ran dangerously low, so the men ditched their plane in the ocean...For nearly a month, Captain Eddie and his companions would fight the water, and the weather, and the scorching sun. They spent many sleepless nights recoiling as giant sharks rammed their rafts. The largest raft was nine by five. The biggest shark...ten feet long.

But, of all their enemies at sea, one proved most formidable: starvation. Eight days out, their rations were long gone or destroyed by the salt water. It would take a miracle to sustain them. And, a miracle occurred. In Captain Eddie's own words, "Cherry," that was the B- 17 pilot, Captain William Cherry, "read the service that afternoon, and we finished with a prayer for deliverance and a hymn of praise. There was some talk, but it tapered off in the oppressive heat. With my hat pulled down over my eyes to keep out some of the glare, I dozed off."

Now, this is still Captain Rickenbacker talking..."Something landed on my head. I knew that it was a sea

gull. I don't know how I knew, I just knew. Everyone else knew too. No one said a word, but peering out from under my hat brim without moving my head, I could see the expression on their faces. They were staring at that gull. The gull meant food...if I could catch it."

And the rest, as they say, is history. Captain Eddie caught the gull. Its flesh was eaten. Its intestines were used for bait to catch fish. The survivors were sustained and their hopes renewed because a lone sea gull, uncharacteristically hundreds of miles from land, offered itself as a sacrifice. You know that Captain Eddie made it.

And now you also know...that he never forgot. Because every Friday evening, about sunset...on a lonely stretch along the eastern Florida seacoast...you could see an old man walking...white-haired, bushy-eyebrowed, slightly bent. His bucket filled with shrimp was to feed the gulls...to remember that one which, on a day long past, gave itself without a struggle...like manna in the wilderness.

Mission Statement

Boswell Regional Center offers
Specialized program options to
Mississippians with
Intellectual and Developmental
Disabilities. These programs are
designed to identify the necessary
supports for successful community
transition. With collaboration
between the individual, family,
and community, dreams can
become reality.





Boswell Regional Center employees receive Governor's service awards of 20 years each! Janie Floyd, Paula Watts and Mary Harvey exemplify hard work and dedication to their jobs and the ones we serve. They were recognized and given a certificate of appreciation at the November Directors' Meeting. Congratulations and BRC appreciates each of you!



Boswell Regional Center employees receive Governor's service awards in recognition of a total of 60 years of state service. They were recognized for their dedication to BRC at the November Directors' Meeting. Pictured in Front: Myrtle Robinson (10 years), Back Row Left to Right: Jacob Ware (10 years), Benjamin Purser (10 years), Rev. Arthur Milton (10 years), Bro. Rudy Jackson (10 years), and Jason Martin (10 years). Congratulations and BRC appreciates each of you!

BRC EOM





During the November Directors' Meeting, Boswell Regional Center recognized Employees of the Month in the area of support/professional staff. Employees of the Month for October are Stanley Martin, Ridgeview; Bobby Prince, Staff Development; and Haley Meadows, Community. Congratulations to each of you!





During the November Directors' Meeting, Boswell Regional Center recognized Employees of the Month for support staff. Employees of the Month for September are Audreana Durr, Community and Dolphus Colon, Fairway. Congratulations to you both!

MAG EOM

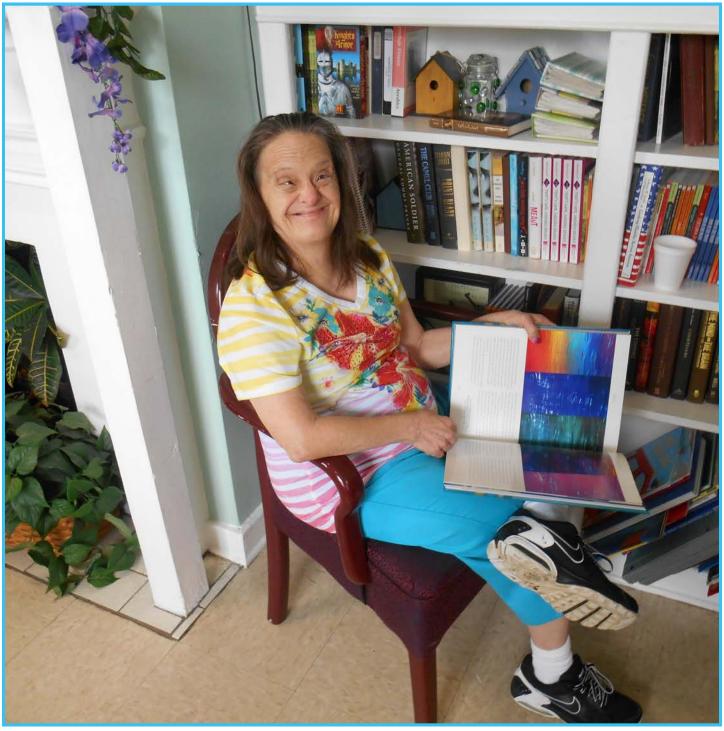


The MS Adolescent Center's October Employee of the Month is Tequillia Bouie. She is a C shift Residential Living Employee. Congratulations and MAC appreciates you!



Dale Mitchell, Medical Services, retires after many years of serving the people of Boswell. Dale's dedication and compassion are tremendous assets that will be greatly missed. Congratulations and enjoy your retirement!

Remembering J. Allen



J. Allen passed away recently. She was a long time resident of Simpson County who participated in programs offered by Boswell Regional Center. She will be missed by many. A memorial was held in her honor at the BRC chapel.

Remembering D. Thomas



D. Thomas passed away recently. He will be remembered for his big smile, as you can see. A memorial was held in his honor at the BRC Chapel where many friends gathered to pay their respects. Mr. Thomas will be greatly missed.

Congratulations!

The Lincoln Lawrence Franklin Regional Library

Brookhaven, Mississippi









*Grand Prize/\$75---K. Loggins for "Sail Past the Mountains" (above)

*First Prize/\$50---A. Thornhill for "Italian Landscape" (above)

*Second Prize/\$30---C. Parker for "Papa Rooster"

*Third Prize/\$20---S. Little for "Autumn Day"

*Judge's Purchase Award/\$100---F. Dunn for embroidered pillowcases

Honorable Mention awards were given to A. McLemore for "Snowscape", D.

Herrington for "Leaping Lady", S. Konshak for "My Flag", D. Howell for "Autumn Flame", E. Thomas for "Magnolia" and B. Landrum for "Cardinal in the Snow".

- Funds for prize money were provided by BRC Friends and Family. Kelly Walters of MS. School for the Arts) donated the \$100 award. Art instructors Kelly Walters and Maurice Calvert of MSA judged the work along with 2 MSA senior art students.
- 190 paintings are exhibited and all are for sale as priced on the gallery cards from \$6-\$25 for the matted work. K. Loggins' framed work is priced on the gallery cards from \$50-\$150. Call Claire Bevell at 901-340-5216 to arrange a transaction or come when Claire will be on-site so that purchases can be made from 9:00-4:00 on Tuesday, November 29 at the library. Pottery may be ordered from Jacob Ware at 601-849-7547.

How to Contact Your Legislator

The 2017 Legislative Session will begin on January 3, 2017. The Department of Mental Health would like to make sure all of its employees are aware of the legislative process and are as involved as they would like to be. Remember that it is your right as a citizen to speak to your legislators and let them know your opinions and your feelings about the directions our state government is going.

We have had employees ask in the past how they can identify and reach out to their legislators. There are a few ways you can do this:

- ⇒ If you happen to know who your legislators are, you can find their contact information at the Mississippi Legislature web site at www.legislature.ms.gov. You'll see a menu near the top of the page that has a button labeled "Legislators." You can hover over that to find your senators and your representatives.
- ⇒ If you do not know who your legislators are, there are some online tools that can help you identify them:
 - ⇒ Visit <u>www.openstates.org</u>. You can enter your address in a text box at the top of the page or browse by state. Entering your address will show you who your legislators are. Clicking their names will also give you their contact information.
 - ⇒ Empower Mississippi is another site that will identify your legislators. You can reach it by using your computer to visit www.empowerms.org/do-you-know-your-legislators/. Once again, you can simply enter your address to identify and get contact information for your legislators.
 - ⇒ The Electric Power Associations of Mississippi have a legislative roster available on their web site and as a smartphone app. Search for "Mississippi Legislative Roster" in your phone's app store or visit ecm.coop/roster on a web browser for their guide.

With the 2017 Legislative Session approaching, it is important to know how to effectively communicate with your legislators if you do decide to contact them.

During session, legislators are very busy and often don't have time for long phone calls or in person conversations. The best way to contact them is through letters or email. If you choose to contact your legislator this session be sure that you are contacting the legislator who represents the district you live or work in. DMH has been discussed often in the off season, which only means it will continue to be discussed during session. When you contact legislators be sure to clearly tell them what you want them to know, but be brief with your message and make sure you are prepared before you send it. Always be honest, accurate and timely with the information you send a legislator.

One thing to remember is that you should not use any state time or resources if you do reach out to your legislators. You will need to contact them on your own time, on your own phone, and through your own personal email address or stationery. While we appreciate our employees' willingness to get involved, it must be done as a private citizen, not as a representative of any state agency.

One final thing to remember is something to remember in all of our professional interactions – always remain polite and courteous. Both state employees and legislators are public servants, and the Legislature has been supportive of our agency's community expansion efforts over the past several years. Please make sure to thank any legislator you speak to for their support, and for taking the time to hear your concerns.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE (Magee, Brookhaven, New Hebron and Shivers)

for all shifts and locations.

If you believe that helping people matters, then we need you at BRC!

For more information contact: Human Resources 601-867-5000 Ext. 75079

> P. O. Box 128 Magee, MS 39111



Boswell Regional Center

Where dreams can become reality.

Mission Statement

Boswell Regional Center (BRC) offers specialized program options to Mississippians with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). These programs are designed to identify the necessary supports for successful community transition. With collaboration between the person, family, and community, dreams can become reality.

Programs

Boswell Regional Center programs offer an extensive range of program and service options to those with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). The primary goal of each existing program using a person centered approach is to allow each person to live more independently and to fulfill their lives through meaningful days.

Programs and services offered through BRC include:

Community Options:

- In Home Services
- Community Living
- Crisis Transition Homes
- Employment Opportunities
 - Day Options
 - Behavior Services
 - Autism Services



Campus Options:

On Campus Residential Services

On Site Day Programs

Annual Membership Fees Single/BRC Employee - Free Membership Information Indicate at right which Single/Non-employee \$5 type of membership you Bronze \$25 wish by circling the Silver \$50 appropriate amount. Gold \$100 Platinum \$500 Address: City: **Fundraisers** State:_ Zip Code: _____ Some examples of fundraisers that have been held are: Phone: Scrub Sales Jewelry Sales **Book Fairs** Please make your **RADA Knives** check payable to: T-shirt Sales Friends & Family Association **Special Hosted Events**

P.O. Box 128

Magee, MS 39111

Purpose

To promote and support the individuals of Boswell Regional Center

To foster the development of programs on their behalf

To recognize and reward the efforts of employees of Boswell Regional Center

To raise and receive funds for the accomplishment of the above purposes.



Boswell Regional Center

Boswell Regional Center
Post Office Box 128
Magee, MS 39111
Telephone: 601-867-5000
www.brc.state.ms.us
A MS Department of Mental Health Facility



Boswell Regional
Center's Friends & Family
Association is a non profit
all volunteer organization
that works to ensure
Boswell individuals are
valued and loved.

All monies received from memberships are donated to the organization to purchase items for the individuals served by Boswell Regional Center.

Donations

Donations may be made in memory or honor of a loved one: In Memory of _____ In Honor of Acknowledgement should be sent to the following: State: Zip Code: _____

Boswell Regional Center

Friends & Family Association P.O. Box 128 Magee, MS 39111 Boswell
Regional
Center
Friends and
Family
Association



Where Dreams Can Become Reality!