

Dates to Remember

- United Way Campaign Contribution cards should be returned to public relations in the administration building no later than Oct. 21. If you choose not to participate you must return your blank card.
- Annual orientation updates are scheduled Oct. 17-21. Contact the Training and Education at 450-4355 to schedule your training dates.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Ala. Mental Health Centers Annual Conference	2
Notes from the CEO	2
Infection Control	3
BayPointe Weathers Katrina	3
Lemoyne Carnival	4



Center Pointe Journal

An employee newsletter

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Miss Sunshine



Mobile Mental Health Center has its own Miss Sunshine according to LeMoyne Center co-workers.

Alicia Richardson, who has recently been named program director for the Mobile Mental Health Center's Project Rebound grant, is known for her enthusiasm and positive attitude.

"Alicia Looks at what needs to be done, evaluates it, makes a decision and gets it done," LeMoyne Supervisor Kathy McMaken said.

In Sept. Richardson began overseeing the coordination of Project Rebound, which is a FEMA program to provide disaster counseling to hurricane victims.

However, it was Richardson's 12-year career with the Center that earned her the nickname "Miss Sunshine."

"I enjoy my consumers," Richardson said. "I love making a difference. I especially enjoy the staff here at the Center."

Richardson came to work for the Center as a way to use her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Washington. She worked as a relief worker for four months and in April 1994 she began working full time as a resi-

dential house manager. Four years later she began working with adult case management.

"I've been through a variety of different buildings and jobs," Richardson said.

After completing her master's degree from the University of Mobile in 2003 she became an in-home therapist at LeMoyne Center and in May 2005 she became coordinator of case management services for children and adolescents at LeMoyne.

"I want to continue to grow and go as far as I can go," Richardson said. "I want to do the Oprah Winfrey show. It's not over until I'm six feet under."

Mental Illness Awareness Week 2005

Leveling the Playing Field: Eliminating the Unintended Consequences of Mental Illness

October 2-8, 2005

This week Mobile Mental Health Center joined NAMI Mobile in its celebration of Mental Illness Awareness Week.

During the week, the Center honored those who are challenged by a mental illness and

celebrated their recoveries. NAMI's theme for the week, *Leveling the Playing Field*, reflects the hope and possibilities of reclaimed lives in communities across the country.

Mental Illness Awareness Week kicked off with a screening of *Out of the Shadows*, a documentary detailing the treatment cure of schizophrenia. NAMI-Mobile also hosted a consumer picnic for

the Center's foster homes and group homes at Municipal Park.

The week concluded with a "Lunch and Learn" seminar for church leaders as an outreach project to inform them where Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana hurricane evacuees can find mental health and housing resources in Mobile.

Ala. Council Conference 2005

Some Mobile Mental Health Center employees had the opportunity to learn from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) when its director, Katherine Power, lead a discussion of national efforts to improve mental healthcare.



Donald McGraw and Kristen Hoffman participated in the Alabama Council of Community Mental Health Centers annual conference.

The Center sent 16 of its staff members to Birmingham for the Alabama Council of Community Mental Health Centers' annual state conference in August where Power addressed the issues changing how mental healthcare is provided at the federal, state and community levels .

During the state conference the Center used that opportunity for continuing education credits and staff devel-

opment. Some of the work sessions in which our staff participated include anger management curriculum, housing for persons with serious mental illness, and community based residential treatment of emotionally disturbed children and adolescents.

In addition to staff development, a few of our staff

members gave presentations about our programs, which helped to maintain our reputation for quality behavioral healthcare in the state. Presenters included Kristen Hoffman, Alana Wright and Crystal Carter who explained the purpose and merits of the Center's Bridge Team.

Other staff presenters included Ray Terrell who spoke about Alabama's Regional Utilization Review as well as Maggie Posey and Steve Dolan who discussed the merits of electronic health records.



Case Manager Crystal Carter and Bridge Team Supervisor Alana Wright present their experiences working with consumers.

Notes from the CEO...

As Mobile Mental Health Center continues to grow we are constantly evaluating our program's locations and strengthening our relationships in the community.

October will be a busy month for the Center when we open our new adult intermediate care facility. The unit will be a large group home that will open late this month.

We also are moving the adult services provided at West Mobile to the Oasis location to create additional space for our children and adolescent outpatient pro-

grams. LeMoyne Center is outgrowing its space on Bishop Lane, and to make room some of its services will continue at what was West Mobile. At the end of the month it will be known as LeMoyne West and Oasis will be called West Mobile.

In September, the Adult Evaluation Unit at Bay-Pointe Hospital opened its new satellite Probate Courtroom. This convenience will make the court hearings process easier on our consumers.

Since Hurricane Katrina

our Center has been working hard to partner with organizations in our community and help hurricane victims. We are in the process of starting a program called Rainbows After the Storm with the Child Advocacy Center to provide counseling for children whose families were impacted by Katrina.

In addition to Rainbows, the Center re-activated its Project Rebound to provide crisis counseling at shelters in the community.

—Tuerk Schlesinger,
CEO

Infection Prevention: It's in your hands

The Center celebrates Infection Prevention Week Oct. 17-23, 2005. Infection prevention and control is an ongoing performance improvement goal of Mobile Mental Health Center.

Nationally, there are approximately 2 million health care acquired infections per year and more than 100,000 deaths annually due to health care acquired infections, causing four to six billion dollars per year in costs to our health care system. Studies have shown that the incidence of health care acquired infections are decreasing with the use of the alcohol-based hand rubs.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests the following measures to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.

1. Wash your hands frequently.
2. Routinely clean and disin-

fect surfaces.

3. Handle and prepare food safely.
4. Get immunized.
5. Use antibiotics appropriately.
6. Keep pets healthy.
7. Avoid contact with wild animals.

During the month of October the Performance Improvement Department will kick off a hand-washing campaign. Good hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent disease transmission. As we embark upon another cold and flu season, hand washing will be crucial to prevent the spread of the Influenza virus. The flu vaccine will be available in limited supply and will be offered to employees who provide direct care and to employees who are deemed high-risk.

The following are steps recommended by JCAHO to reduce the

spread of colds and flu:

1. **Clean your hands:** Wash hands for at least 20 seconds with an anti-microbial soap and water. If hands are not visibly soiled use an alcohol based hand rub to routinely decontaminate hands. Avoid placing your hands to your face.
2. **Cover your mouth and nose:** Many diseases are spread through sneeze and coughs. Germs can travel three feet or more. Keep tissues handy and discard appropriately. If you don't have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose with the crook of your elbow.
3. **Avoid close contact:** Stay at least three feet from individuals with cold and flu symptoms. If you have a fever it is best to stay home.

—Sonya Sims
Performance Improvement Specialist



Anthony Summerlin, LPN demonstrates the correct way to wash hands while Sonya Sims watches.

BayPointe Weathers Katrina

While much of the Gulf Coast and Mobile are still recovering from Hurricane Katrina, Mobile Mental Health operations are up and running thanks to the excellent employees at the Center.

About 160 consumers, staff members and a few family members were at BayPointe during the hurricane. Mobile Mental Health followed its hurricane plan and evacuated five group homes to the hospital. These homes included Azalea, Old Military and the three specialized homes the Center operates. All of the other group homes sheltered in place.

“This hurricane presented more



BayPointe administrative staff Robert Carlock, Sheri Nicholson and Olivia Nettles work cafeteria lines because the kitchen staff needed help during the storm.

challenges than any other storm the Center has faced, but our dedicated staff met those challenges with resourcefulness and quick thinking,” Director of

Performance Improvement Sherrill Alexander said. While outpatient offices were closed two days for the storm, hospital and residential staff members worked many hours during the storm. BayPointe administrative staff Robert Carlock, Sheri Nicholson and Olivia Nettles worked the cafeteria lines because the kitchen staff needed help serving extra people while power was out.

“Our residential staff members are always prepared to work during severe weather, and we appreciate their dedication and compassion while doing so,” Alexander said.

LeMoyne Carnival 2005

The Lemoyne Center held its Third Annual Carnival at Tri-Centennial Park for Mobile Mental Health's youngest consumers.

Case managers at LeMoyne Center organized a summer party for the outpatient children's and adolescent facility. Everyone pitched in to help.

Candice Biby recruited her step dad to build a "Go-Fishing" booth for the children. The consumers dropped their clothespin hook to catch school supplies and prizes.

"The kids love it," Biby said. "Something to do with the mystery of the clip."

The Carnival had a moonwalk, hoola-hoop contest, bean bag toss, face painting and karaoke. Case managers grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for lunch.

But the children's favorite event was the dunking booth. Case Manager Raheem Ruffin climbed into the booth while the consumers tried their best to dunk him, and a few of them succeeded too.

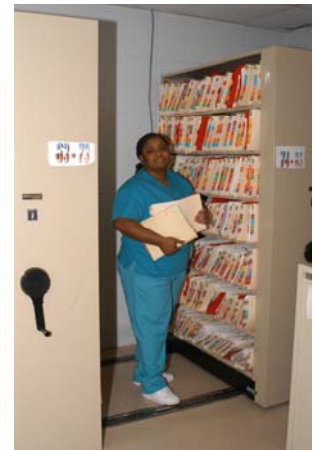
"It's all about the kids," Ruffin said. "The object is for me not to get in the water."



Raheem Ruffin waits for the children to throw a fast ball and dunk him during the carnival.

Many sponsors helped LeMoyne host the event. They include Wal-Mart, Winn Dixie, Coca-Cola, U.S. Marine Corps Recruitment, U.S. Navy Recruitment, Southtrust Bank, Gulf Federal Bank, Target, Chik-Fil-A and Sports Academy.

MMH Photo Gallery:



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Our Mission

Mobile Mental Health Center's mission is to plan, promote and facilitate a system of mental illness, substance abuse and mental retardation services; and to encourage the recovery of consumers by providing efficient quality behavioral healthcare through clinical excellence, consumer and family involvement, cultural awareness and community partnerships.