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2023 Annual Employee Recognition

By: Julie Cox

With a Medieval theme, the 2023 Annual Employee Feasting and Fun Appreciation Gathering was held on Friday, the Fifth of May in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-three in the Royal Gathering Room (aka Building 71/Conference Room). All 2022 Employees of the Month were honored, with awards presented to three outstanding individuals selected as Employees of the Year in the categories of Direct Care, Clinical Service, and Support Service.

As honorees entered the building, they were greeted with a goody bag and a scratch-off card to claim prizes from the host. They then moved throughout the building participating in medieval-themed activities like dragon slaying, a virtual tour of the Moors of Scotland, and a special viewing of the Hall of Portraits. They also stopped by photo booths for some fun and commemorative photos and relaxed in the castle garden while enjoying refreshments. Ms. Ceci Whitehurst served as the Strolling Troubadour and Mr. Robert Dixon as our Fearless Dragon throughout the event.

Honorees and guests then assembled in the Royal Gathering Room to feast on a





lunch of Dragon Wings (chicken wings), Wild Boar (ham), Roasted Maize (corn), Roasted Potatoes, Legumes (green beans), Wild Berry Pie (blueberry), and Bread Pudding.

Mr. Bill Bobbs, President of Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc. welcomed the honorees and guests and delivered the Invocation. Special guests included Representative Stephanie Foster, District 63, and Department of Mental Health

staff, Wendy Bailey, Executive Director, Katie Storr, Chief of Staff, and Adam Moore, Director of Communications and Planning. Friends Board members recognized were Joel Ross, Amy Walker, Dee Payne, Bettye Harpe, Marilyn Garth, and Kim Edwards.

Mr. James G. “Bo” Chastain, Director of MSH, addressed the attendees and remarked, “This event has been painstakingly designed to bring a smile

to your face, and maybe some outright laughter, to each and every one in attendance. The spirit of the event is to remind you to take care of yourself, both physically and mentally, and remember to make time to relax and enjoy the journey of this thing called life.” Mr. Chastain then introduced the entertainment for the day, Mr. Dorian Lachance.



Dorian Lachance, The Magic Man, took the floor and entertained the crowd. Combining his life-long hobby of magic with his high-energy brand of comedy, he brought many wows and laughs from those in attendance. With his twist on classic card tricks, to making things disappear, Lachance kept all eyes glued to his performance. Wrapping up his show with a Rubik's Cube analogy, reminding us that, "We all make judgements about how something should look based on what we've already seen, with the "solved" Rubik's cube being an Instagram story, and real life looking more like the "unsolved" cube. When in reality, the "unsolved" cube of real life contains all of the twists and turns, all of the differences that make each and every life unique."

Mr. Bobbs then introduced the 2023 Employee Recognition Committee, which included Stacey Davis, Daniel Ratliff, Robert Dixon, Sheila Shows, and 2022 Employees of the Year Gerome Hughes and Kevin Moore. Mr. Chastain recognized all Employees of the Month for 2022 in attendance and presented each of them with a \$25 gift card and an Employee of the Month pin. In the month of their nomination, each EOM was presented with a \$100 check from Friends



of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc. and a recognition plaque.

Then, the moment that everyone was anxiously awaiting, the announcement

of the 2022 Employees of the Year. Each person selected as Employee of the Year was presented with a \$250 check from Friends and a special plaque of recognition.



Carolyn Bingham was named Mississippi State Hospital's Employee of the Year for Direct Care. Carolyn has worked at MSH for seven years and has served on multiple buildings on campus. She currently serves in Receiving Services. Ms. Bingham is a Jackson native and attended Provine High School, where she played tennis. She received a scholarship to attend Jackson State University, where she majored

in Early Childhood Development and played on the Women's Volleyball Team. When nominating Bingham, Mike Shaw said, "Carolyn is the glue that holds 201/1 Female Receiving together when the going gets tough. Her constant smile and willingness to consistently work double shifts during the current staff shortage encourages us all. She tends to gravitate towards the most difficult patients,

spending time with them, listening to their needs and requests, and relaying that information to their treatment team. She's the type of employee that you miss when she is not there." Carolyn enjoys meeting new patients and helping new employees at MSH. In her free time, she enjoys taking care of her plants and helping with school activities.



June McCafferty was named Mississippi State Hospital's Employee of the Year for Clinical Service. June works in Social Services and has been employed at MSH since 2009. Ms. McCafferty is a Jackson native, she attended Jim Hill High School and Mississippi College. Brittany Frances,

who nominated McCafferty, noted, "Ms. June has such a caring and compassionate heart and is always there for the residents when they need someone to talk to. Building 78 is truly blessed to have her, she goes above and beyond to make sure residents are well taken care of." June

likes being able to help the patients and residents at MSH. In her free time, she enjoys riding motorcycles, fishing, and playing the piano. She has five children and 15 grandchildren.



Lela Henry was named Mississippi State Hospital's Employee of the Year for Support Services. Lela serves as a Vocational Training Instructor in Public Relations and has been employed at MSH for 28 years. Ms. Henry is a Bolton native and attended Jim Hill High School and Jackson State University. She played in the band in high school and at JSU. When nominating Henry, Kathy Denton and Jerry Johnson both noted, "Lela Henry is very much an asset to MSH. There are very few people who are willing and able to do what she does on a daily basis. As an example, she is the only person who has volunteered to screen C-Shift employees since the inception of COVID in March 2020 – 7 days a week! In addition, she comes in and completes her regular duties in the Print Shop. Her "extra" energy is devoted to helping wherever she can in PR. She completed every patient and resident gift bag in the Christmas House during the 2021 season. Lela also routinely comes to

my office and asks what she can do to help anywhere in the department. Everyone should be lucky enough to have a Lela." Denton added, "On a daily basis she brings joy wherever she goes. Known for dancing/singing as C-Shift comes in, they have all come to love her. She is uplifting to me every day and reminds me to keep things in perspective and remember what's important." Lela has made life-long friends with her co-workers at MSH. In her free time, she enjoys shopping, eating chicken every day, working out, working in her yard, attending flea markets, and traveling all over the world. She has two sons.

The 2023 Annual Employee Recognition Luncheon is a project of Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc. Friends allocates funds annually for various employee recognition activities. Since 1978, hundreds of employees have been honored for their outstanding service

through this program, and 89 have been recognized as Employee of the Year.



2023 Employee Recognition Gallery













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2023

Employee Recognition

Direct Care Lady Sitt	Clinical Services Lady McGafferty	Direct Care Lady Bingham	Support Services Lady Borvath	Clinical Services Lady Hartong	Clinical Services Lady Lakeland	Support Services Lady Hines
Support Services Sir Crawford	Direct Care Lady Sanders	Clinical Services Lady Henderson	Support Services Sir Savill	Direct Care Lady Wilkin	Support Services Lady Triplett	Direct Care Lady Brunfield
Clinical Services Lady Burns	Support Services Sir Middleton	Direct Care Lady Proctor	Clinical Services Lady Kirkland	Support Services Lady Thomas	Direct Care Lady Nyles-McInt	Clinical Services Lady Delle
Support Services Lady Mason	Direct Care Lady Wright	Clinical Services Lady Waterman	Support Services Sir Long	Direct Care Sir Johnson	Clinical Services Lady Carter	Support Services Lady Meyer

