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2024 Employee Recognition Event



By: Julie Cox

With a Roaring 20's theme, the 2024 Employee Appreciation Event looked like a scene out of *The Great Gatsby*. The event was held on Thursday, April 25 in Building 71 to honor all 2023 Employees of the Month and recognize three outstanding individuals that were selected as Employees of the Year in the categories of Direct Care, Clinical Service, and Support Service.

Honorees entered the building directly into the VIP Parlor, where they were provided with a playing card indicating a location to relax, enjoy hors d'oeuvres, and visit with other honorees and special guests. The Mississippi State Hospital (MSH) Jazz & Blues Trio, which consists of Denesha Evans, Tyrone Crawford, and David Putnam from the Music Services Department, provided live entertainment while honorees and guests mingled and took commemorative photos to celebrate The Golden Age.

Next, everyone moved into the swanky dinner room, where Ms. Dee Payne, Treasurer of Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc. welcomed everyone and delivered the Invocation.

The Detectives Comedy Dinner Theatre group then took center stage to entertain the crowd between dinner courses, served by Art Services, Public Relations, and the Service Outcome Division/Employee Health. The interactive show centered around a gold digger who met her fate in the end, then the audience teamed up to answer questions about the characters and decide "Who did it?" Nikita Jones, Human Resources, commented, "It was hilarious. This is my first dinner theatre and I've had a great time." Toya Lewis, Inpatient Services, added, "The entertainment was great. I've never been to a dinner theater before. It was a little bit unusual, but I liked it."

Around the room, the sentiment was the same:





The Detectives Comedy Theatre Cast

I'VE NEVER BEEN TO A DINNER THEATRE BEFORE, IT'S EXCITING.

- Cassandra Coleman, Inpatient Services



Denesha Evans



The MSH Jazz & Blues Trio



THIS IS MY FIRST DINNER THEATRE, IT'S SO ENTERTAINING.

- Teneshia Williams, Forensics





I REALLY ENJOYED IT. THE SHOW WAS HILARIOUS AND THE BLACK WIDOW WAS VERY FUNNY. I'VE NEVER BEEN TO A DINNER THEATRE BEFORE, IT WAS DIFFERENT AND COOL.

- Clarice Erving, Inpatient Services



Tim Durr- Friends Board Member



Lease Brent

IT'S WONDERFUL, WE'RE HAVING SUCH A DELIGHTFUL TIME TODAY.

- Donna Brown, Public Relations

Mr. James G. “Bo” Chastain, Director of MSH, then delivered welcome remarks and recognized our special guests, which included the Department of Mental Health staff, Katie Storr, Chief of Staff, Adam Moore, Director of Communications and Planning, and Josh Lewis, Communications Division/Videographer. Friends Board members recognized were Dee Payne, Marilyn Garth, Kim Rayburn, Tim Durr, Tony Gomillion, Jessie Buckley, and Jeannie Pittman. MSH Directors of Nursing in attendance were Chiquita

Boyd, Brandi Barwick, Hollie Vanderford, Kamekia Grant, Ashley Lilley, Aleshia Ford, Kimberly Holifield, Kathy Pack, Judith Jones, Angela Ransom, and Lease Brent.

Ms. Dee Payne then introduced the 2024 Employee Recognition Committee, which included Stacey Davis, Chiquita Boyd, Robert Dixon, Kevin Moore, and Sheila Shows. Mr. Chastain and Ms. Payne recognized all 2023 Employees of the month by presenting each of them with

an Employee of the Month pin and a \$25 gift card to Mangia Bene, which includes BRAVO!, Board Street, and Sal & Mookies. In the month of their nomination, each EOM was presented with a \$100 check from Friends of MSH, Inc. and a recognition plaque.

Finally, the big moment arrived, the announcement of the 2023 Employees of the Year. Each person selected as EOY was presented with a check for \$250 from Friends and a special recognition plaque.

IT WAS REALLY ENTERTAINING, I ENJOYED ALL OF IT.

– Michelle Hearn,
Social Services

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EOY2024-Direct Care Winner – Dee Payne, Friends of MSH Treasurer, Katie Storr, DMH Chief of Staff, Wilma Lee, Direct Care Employee of the Year, and James G. “Bo” Chastain, Director of MSH

Wilma Lee was named Mississippi State Hospital’s Employee of the Year for Direct Care. She has worked at MSH for 39 years and has served on multiple buildings on campus. She currently serves as a Support Care Professional III in Inpatient Services on Building 203, Ward 3. Ms. Lee is a lifelong resident of Braxton, where she attended McLaurin High School, Hinds Community College, and Rice College. When nominating Lee, Nieshia Taylor noted, “I am nominating Ms. Lee for the outstanding work she has done for the

unit. She is the example of someone that embodies the MSH core values of respect, accountability, and teamwork. She does an excellent job in completing all her tasks in a timely manner, she works when she is scheduled, and she arrives on time for her shift. Ms. Lee is very respectful to her coworkers and other employees that work around her. She is greatly appreciated for all she does in the unit.” Lee likes serving the patients at MSH. In her free time, she enjoys reading and helping others. She has one child and two grandchildren.

Jestyne McGee was named Mississippi State Hospital's Employee of the Year for Clinical Service. She has worked at MSH for 27 years and currently serves as a Therapeutic Therapist III in Recreation on Building 201, Ward 1. Ms. McGee is a native of Goodman and graduated from Williams-Sullivan High School. She also attended Jackson State University, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, with a minor in Therapeutic Recreation. Robbie Rhodes nominated McGee and shared, "Jestyne always shows respect and dignity for her patients that she serves, as well as her co-workers and staff that she works with. She handles any problems that may come up with a positive attitude and a smile on her face. If there is help needed with anything outside her direct job duties, she is one of the first ones to volunteer to help. Jestyne very much embodies the MSH core values." McGee loves the people at MSH and enjoys the fact that no two days are the same, and she gets an opportunity every day to make a difference. In her free time, she enjoys shopping, cooking, and traveling.



EOY2024-Clinical Services Winner – Dee Payne, Friends of MSH Treasurer, Katie Storr, DMH Chief of Staff, Jestyne McGee, Clinical Service Employee of the Year, Stacey Davis, Director of Therapeutic Recreation, and James G. "Bo" Chastain, Director of MSH

Angela Drane was named Mississippi State Hospital's Employee of the Year for Support Service. She has worked at MSH for five years and currently serves as a Human Resource Generalist II in Human Resources on Building 61. The daughter of a minister, Drane was born in Kosciusko and then attended six schools in three different states, she graduated from Forest Hill High School. In her nomination of Drane, Susan Chandler noted, "I would like to nominate Angela Drane as Employee of the Month. Mrs. Drane is very proficient in the work she does. Her professional attitude displayed while working with newly hired personnel is awesome. She is very helpful and understanding with all members of the hospital staff. She always smiles and is more than happy to assist when needed. She uses kind words when speaking to and of others. She is very dependable and always willing to participate in special events sponsored by the hospital." Drane likes her co-workers at MSH. In her free time, she enjoys going to concerts, traveling, and music. She has three daughters and 11 grandchildren.



EOY2024-Support Services Winner – Dee Payne, Friends of MSH Treasurer, Katie Storr, DMH Chief of Staff, Angela Drane, Support Service Employee of the Year, and James G. "Bo" Chastain, Director of MSH

The 2024 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 92 have been recognized as Employee of the Year.



Friends of MSH Board Members – (front row) Jessie Buckley, Jeannie Pittman, Marilyn Garth
(back row) Tony Gomillion, Dee Payne, Kim Rayburn





Haley Dyess - Clinical Services



Linda Evans - Support Services



Nieshia Taylor - Support Services



Erica McAfee - Support Services



Teneshia Williams - Direct Care



Cassandra Coleman - Direct Care



Tanya Shaw - Support Services

**I THINK IT'S
WONDERFUL. I'VE
ALWAYS WANTED
TO GO TO A DINNER
THEATRE.**

—Angela Drane, Human Resources



Niketa Jones - Support Services



Clarice Erving - Support Services



Toya Lewis - Direct Care



Caitlyn Radica - Direct Care



Mike Shaw - Clinical Services



Donna Brown - Support Services



Michelle Hearn - Clinical Services

I ENJOYED THE EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR BANQUET AND THANK ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN PUTTING TOGETHER SUCH A GREAT EVENT.

-Mike Shaw, Inpatient Services



Wanda Walker - Direct Care



Shanika Lee - Clinical Services



Brandie Gibbs - Support Services



Tim McLarin - Support Services



Ian Cranfield - Support Services



Barbara Flowers - Clinical Services



Charlotte Travis - Clinical Services