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MSH HOSTS PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



Mississippi State Hospital and the Department of Mental Health hosted on Nov. 1 a group of officials from the Region 8 (Rankin, Madison, Copiah, Lincoln and Simpson Counties) and Region 9 (Hinds County) catchment areas for a program on new community-based services MSH is partnering in.

Members of the Legislature from those two regions as well as sheriffs and Circuit and Chancery Court judges and clerks were invited to attend the event titled “Collaboration, Innovations and Progress in Mental Health Services.”

“Today, we are serving what we hope will be good food and good news,” said MSH Director James Chastain.

Presentations were given on:

- a planned community-based Supervised Living program;
- a recent forensic community-based competency evaluation workshop; and
- jail-based competence restoration services that were implemented in two counties in July.

Presenters included: Emile Craig, Director

of Administration, Region 8 Mental Health Services; Kambria Thompson, Assistant Outpatient Team Leader, Region 9 Behavioral Health Services; Dr. Amanda Gugliano, MSH Forensic Services; Philip Gaines, Court Liaison, MSH Forensic Services; Dr. Thomas Recore, Forensic Psychiatrist, MSH Forensic Services; and Major Mary Rushing, Hinds County Detention Center.

MSH, DMH and the Region 8 CMHC partnered in July in a pilot program to implement jail-based competence restoration services in Hinds and Madison counties. The program already has produced positive results.

“I’d tell any jail, ‘This is a program that you need to have,’” Rushing said.

Two Region 8 staff members, who were trained by members of the MSH Forensic Services staff, are providing the services in the Hinds and Madison detention centers. These jail-based restoration services can reduce the time an individual might require as an inpatient at MSH and can divert some individuals from ever having to be admitted to the hospital.

Three persons in Hinds County to date have

been restored to competency and allowed to proceed in their legal cases. The overall cost savings already generated by this program has exceeded the annual expense of the program. In addition, removing those three names from the waiting list results in quicker resource access for others in the state.

Individuals receive therapy in one-on-one and group settings, anger management and anxiety reduction.

“This program has helped our staff better manage them,” Rushing said. “In the system, their mental health can deteriorate while they are in custody. This program is restoring them to a level of competency. That helps us a whole lot.”

In an effort to make pre-trial competence evaluations more readily available on a local level, MSH’s Forensic Services staff recruited participants for a training program in August entitled “Community-Based Forensic Screening Evaluations of Competence to Stand Trial.”

“We were hoping to expand the number of doctors who can do competence to stand trial evaluations,” Gugliano said.

Twenty-one licensed psychologists and psy-



Kambria Thompson and Emile Craig



Major Mary Rushing

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chiatrists from around the state completed the training, and Gugliano said the feedback was very positive. Names of the participants will be provided to court administrators.

There is a backlog of defendants in the Mississippi court system awaiting pre-trial competence evaluation, and there are few licensed psychologists and psychiatrists trained to perform them. MSH has a lengthy waiting list for pre-trial evaluation and competence restoration services. A larger pool of evaluators providing community-based services could help alleviate the backlog.

But Gugliano pointed out, that does not solve the problem of the relatively small number of beds available for evaluation and restoration services on MSH's Forensic Services unit.

MSH has been approved by the Legislature for pre-planning of renovation or replacement to the Forensic Services building, which was built in 1955 and contains only 35 total beds, 15 of which are available for restoration services.

"The problem is not unique to us," Gaines said of the scarcity of forensic beds. But, he noted, Mississippi has the fewest forensic beds of any state in the country.

Gaines presented data that showed the significant progress MSH has made in the last two years in trimming the numbers on the wait list and reducing the waiting time for evaluations and restorations.

MSH, DMH and the Region 8 and 9 CMHCs are collaborating on a program to provide community-based, Supervised Living opportunities for individuals currently receiving services at MSH. The Arc of Mississippi has begun the discovery process to identify indi-

viduals that would be appropriate candidates and who desire to live in the community.

While the program is still in the early stages of development, the plan is for Region 8 and Region 9 to establish four-bed Supervised Living homes that will be staffed by trained mental health professionals 24 hours a day 7 days a week. In addition to assisting the individuals with basic activities of daily living in their home, other services provided by the CMHCs will include, but not necessarily limited to, therapy, community support services, doctor and nursing services, medication monitoring, 24/7 mobile crisis response, crisis stabilization and psychosocial rehabilitation.

Craig said one crucial aspect will be educating the communities in which the homes will be located about the individuals involved and the goals of the program.

"We understand there's still a stigma around individuals with a mental illness, but we don't want that to prevent them from living in the community," he said. "We want to make sure people understand that the individuals in a Supervised Living program will not only be monitored by trained mental health staff 24 hours a day, but will also receive the full array of behavioral health services available through the CMHC. Based on the needs of the individual, our goal is to wrap the necessary services around each person so that they have the opportunity to live in the least restrictive environment possible."

The Region 8 CMHC encompasses Copiah, Lincoln, Madison, Rankin and Simpson counties and Region 9 is Hinds County. Other regional community mental health centers in the state are being approached about participating in this program.



Dr. Amanda Gugliano



Phillip Gaines

MSH OFFICERS CRAIN, FALLO GRADUATE FROM MLEOTA

BY MIKE CHRISTENSEN



Officer Travis Crain, MSH Police Chief Jeff Luckey and Officer Devin Fallo at the MLEOTA graduation ceremony.

Mississippi State Hospital Police Officers Travis Crain and Devin Fallo graduated from the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy in a Nov. 30 ceremony at the Brandon Civic Center.

Crain, a Puckett resident, has been on the MSH staff for 11 months. Fallo, from Pearl, has served at MSH for 14 months.

Crain and Fallo recently completed the rigorous 12-week MLEOTA program as part of the 68-member Basic Class No. 256. The program included over 500 hours of classroom and practical training.

Graduates came from agencies across the state. Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics Director John Dowdy served as guest speaker at the graduation ceremony.

BIG BRASS QUINTET

The Mississippi Symphony Orchestra Brass Quintet held a Christmas concert on Dec. 5 in the MSH Auditorium on Building 38. The group performed a special selection of holiday classics both popular and spiritual. The quintet includes two trumpets, a French horn, a trombone and a tuba.



'THE POWER OF THANKSGIVING'

Chaplain Christine Frazier delivered the Thanksgiving Service sermon – “The Power of Thanksgiving” -- on Nov. 22 at Building 38, reminding all that Thanksgiving isn’t just one day out of the year, that we should all give thanks every day for little things as well as big things. Chaplains Mark Kangar, B.J. McAlpin and Clinton Robinson of the MSH Pastoral Care Department also participated in the service, which included a song by Bridget Shield and piano accompaniment by Denesha Evans.

Worship services are offered in the Chapel at Building 38 on the following days/times for everyone who is able and interested in attending: WEDNESDAYS, 2:30 P.M. and SUNDAYS, 9:30 A.M.



CONGRATULATIONS NOVEMBER EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Clinical Service
Valeria Grim,
JNH, Building 41, A Shift

Valeria Grim has been named Mississippi State Hospital's November Employee of the Month for Clinical Service. Florence native Grim is a Behavioral Health Specialist on Jaquith Nursing Home's Monroe Inn. Grim, who has a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Mississippi and a master's from Jackson State University, has worked at MSH since 1992.



Support Services
Cynthia Miller,
IPS, Building 43 – A Shift

Cynthia Miller has been named Mississippi State Hospital's November Employee of the Month for Support Services. Miller, who was born in Indianola and resides in Pearl, is a Forensic Investigator in the Forensic Services Unit. The University of Southern Mississippi graduate has worked at MSH for more than 14 years.



Direct Care
Edwin Stallworth,
IPS, Building 201, A Shift

Edwin Stallworth has been named Mississippi State Hospital's November Employee of the Month for Direct Care. Stallworth, a Biloxi native who now lives in Jackson, is an Active Treatment Technician working in Male Receiving. A University of Southern Mississippi alumnus, Stallworth has worked at MSH for over 19 years.

CONGRATULATIONS OCTOBER EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



Clinical Service
Marquies Byrd
IPS, Building 23 – A Shift

Marquies Byrd has been named Mississippi State Hospital's October Employee of the Month for Clinical Service. Byrd, a Jackson resident and Jackson State University graduate, is a Social Worker who works at Oak Circle Center. Byrd started work at MSH in July of 2015.



Direct Care
Nicholas Johnson,
IPS, Building 203, C Shift

Nicholas Johnson has been named Mississippi State Hospital's October Employee of the Month for Direct Care. Johnson, a California native who lives in Hazlehurst, is a Mental Health Technician in Inpatient Services/Male Receiving. Johnson has been employed at MSH for nine years.



Support Services
Cherry Rodgers,
IPS, Building 202 – A Shift

Cherry Rodgers has been named Mississippi State Hospital's October Employee of the Month for Support Services. Rodgers, a Vaughn native who now lives in Byram, is an Admissions Coordinator who formerly worked in the Medical Records Department. A University of Mississippi graduate, she has worked at MSH for almost nine years.

The MSH employee recognition program is sponsored by Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, Inc.