



# MENTAL OUTLOOK

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Number 3

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## FRIENDS OF MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL CELEBRATES 25 YEARS



At the 2012 Friends of MSH Annual Meeting, members voted in the board of directors for the upcoming year. Pictured are (front row, l to r) Vice President Bridget Lowery, Marilyn Garth, Miriam Hollens, Secretary Sheila Shows, Jerald Ball, Tim Durr, (back row, l to r) Kathy Denton, Marc Lewis, Treasurer Dee Payne, Bobby Stephens, Steve Lesley, and MSH Director James G. Chastain.

Several dozen members of Friends of Mississippi State Hospital gathered on Building 71 this past August for a momentous occasion – the 25th anniversary of the volunteer organization that does so much for the hospital, its employees, and most importantly, its patients.

During the meeting, board members approved a slate of projects for the organization's upcoming year, including employee recognition, volunteer appreciation, and patient events like the fireworks celebration and the annual Harry O'Steen Golf Tournament. It also gave those present a chance to look back on the history of Friends of MSH and recognize some of those volunteers and employees who were instrumental in getting the group its start back in 1987.

Mr. Jerald Ball, former Volunteer Services Director at Mississippi State Hospital, was honored for his achievements in helping the hospital's volunteer program become what it is today.

"Even though Mr. Ball retired in 2005, he has built a volunteer services program that can transition into the future and continue to reap dividends for our patients, residents and our hospital," Mississippi State Hospital Director James G. Chastain said.

"He continues to be an avid supporter and volunteer at MSH. Mr. Jerald Ball exemplifies the spirit of volunteer service, and has spent his professional and personal life promoting and nurturing that spirit in others."



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# MENTAL OUTLOOK

## MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

James G. Chastain, FACHE,  
Director

Kathy Denton  
Director, Public Relations Department

## PRODUCTION

**Editorial**  
Adam Moore, Editor

**Design**  
Ken Patterson, Graphic Artist

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## MISSION

Mississippi State Hospital facilitates improvement in the quality of life for Mississippians who are in need of mental health, chemical dependency or nursing home services by rehabilitating to the least restrictive environment utilizing a range of psychiatric and medical services which reflect the accepted standard of care and are in compliance with statutory and regulatory guidelines.

## VISION

We will be a customer-driven organization.

## CORE VALUES

Respect - Teamwork - Trust  
Communication - Commitment

## MEMBER OF

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American Hospital Association  
Mississippi Hospital Association  
Southern States Psychiatric Hospital Association

ACCREDITED BY  
The Joint Commission

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# A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR...

Welcome to the Fall 2012 issue of Mental Outlook. Summer is barely behind us, but we are already looking towards the end of the year and everything those months bring to the hospital. One thing we can always expect during this time of year is the unwavering support of the many volunteers who visit Mississippi State Hospital to make sure our patients, residents, and clients have a happy and memorable holiday season. Hundreds of volunteers are kind enough to donate their time, energy, and resources to those we serve. It's a busy time of year for our employees as we prepare for these volunteers, and also for the other holiday activities like our Christmas parade and annual Santa Day event. We would love to have you involved in any way you would like to help, so please read more about the holiday season at the hospital later in this issue.

I'm also pleased to share several other recent events with you. Friends of Mississippi State Hospital held its annual meeting this past August and was blessed to celebrate 25 years as an organization. During the meeting, former MSH Volunteer Services Director Jerald Ball was honored for his outstanding contributions to the hospital and the Friends group throughout the years. His support, and the support of our many volunteers like him, has been invaluable.

The hospital also hosted a celebration of recovery and the annual Serendipity art show and silent auction in September. Both of these occasions showcased the incredible lives that can be lived by those individuals who are living with mental illnesses. As always, the work on display in Serendipity was fantastic, and every piece went home with someone. As we recognized National Recovery Month in September, our Community Services Division put on the recovery program that carried an excellent message – that good mental health is vital to one's overall health, that mental health treatment is effective and people can and do recover to lead happy fulfilling lives. Thank you for reading,

Sincerely,

James Chastain

Friends of MSH, Inc. would like to say

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Though the Friends charter was signed in 1987, Mr. Chastain said the foundation for the group was laid in 1984, when Mr. Ball became Director of Volunteer Services. At the time, the hospital had a core group of loyal volunteers and employees who made donations and provided activities, but the hospital had no real volunteer organization or outreach.

Mr. Ball immediately developed a plan to recruit and retain volunteers, and he focused on making sure patients had adequate clothing, and that they were not forgotten during the Christmas holiday season. The Clothing Donation Center on Building 71 was established, and Mr. Ball promoted it through press releases and presentations to area churches and civic organizations.

He also established the Christmas House and Santa Day, traditions that still continue, by once again presenting the needs of the MSH patients to churches and volunteer groups, and sending personal letters that described how others could get personally involved in helping meet those needs.

Mr. Ball's initiatives that were just fledgling programs back then are full-blown successes today. In 2011, the Clothing Donation Center recorded 324 donations from individuals and groups valued at more than \$96,000. During the year, more than 4,500 clothing items were distributed to MSH

patients and residents. Also in 2011, more than 3,000 volunteers provided a record 232 activities and parties for patients and residents. Of those, 115 were provided during the holiday season by more than 2,043 volunteers. A total of 15,168 volunteer hours were logged for the year, valued at more than \$315,000.

"I have such fond memories of Mississippi State Hospital and the staff here, the Friends organization, all the presidents of Friends who put up with me to do so many of the good things that have happened over the years," Mr. Ball said. "I could sit here and call people by name and just say thank you, thank you, thank you for all you've done, but I'll just say thank you to everyone, and keep up the good work."

All MSH employees are welcome to become members of Friends. If you would like to join or renew, a Friends membership is \$20 a year for an individual, \$100 for an individual lifetime membership, or \$150 for a husband and wife lifetime membership. There are also several other sponsorship levels for businesses.

Members not only help contribute to the projects funded throughout the year, but enjoy membership benefits at several local businesses, including Abner's in Brandon, Kismet's, Long Electric, Play It Again Sports, and more.

## MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL PREPARES FOR PERSON-DIRECTED PLANNING

A group of Mississippi State Hospital employees have met twice in recent months to learn about and discuss a fundamental change in the way the hospital and community-based service providers plan and conduct treatment for patients and clients.

Linda McDowell, Ph.D., a professor in the University of Southern Mississippi's College of Education and Psychology, led the group in the discussions on person-directed planning, recovery, and the continued transition to community-based care for those in need of mental health services.

This meeting came on the heels of a similar discussion among leaders of Jaquith Nursing Home only a couple of weeks prior. In that meeting, JNH employees discussed culture change and how to move nursing homes away from their roots as medical facilities and creating a more home-like environment for residents. Such a culture change incorporates resident-directed planning – giving residents more choices in aspects of their everyday lives, from when to wake up and go to bed to how to decorate the buildings and what to eat for their meals.

These workshops have featured a similar focus on the individual, but instead of catering to the needs of residents of a long-term care facility,



Pictured are (front row, l to r) Certified Peer Support Specialist Sandra Caron, Certified Peer Support Specialist Beverly Pettigrew, Dr. Linda McDowell, (back row, l to r) MSH Director of Psychological Services Amy Baskin, Community Services Operations Manager Jennifer Giambrone, Sherry Holloway, Director of Social Services Jackie Fleming, Community Services Director Dr. Cynthia Johnson, and Department of Mental Health Bureau Director of Community Mental Health Services Jake Hutchins.

the sessions led by McDowell were focused on individuals in need of psychiatric treatment in the community or in an inpatient setting.

Presentations included an overview of the future focus of mental health services nationally and in the state of Mississippi, a brief history of the concept of mental health recovery, and an overview of some professional literature supporting recovery-based services. Throughout the training Dr. McDowell provided examples of tools and strategies that may be used to redesign services to a recovery-based, person-directed model, such as the use of individual profiles and plans specifically tailored for each individual patient.

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To help drive the points home, the listeners also heard from two Certified Peer Support Specialists. These individuals were able to share their unique perspectives and discuss ways to make treatment more focused and personal for each individual served. One Peer Support Specialist indicated that getting to know someone being treated for mental health can make a big difference in their treatment.

"You don't always have to be the stern professional," she said.

Employees here at MSH said they had personal experiences in how that is true. One group of employees discussed how a patient they knew had a strong desire to do physical work, as it made him more relaxed and feel more productive.

Making sure individuals have the chances to follow up with any of their specific goals or desires can make a big difference in keeping them on the road to recovery. That goal, which could be something as simple as having an opportunity for a productive job, can be key to living a satisfying life for many people.

A tenet of person-directed planning is making sure there are as few barriers as possible to keep an individual from reaching the goals, desires community activities, and relationships that are important to them. A barrier could be something like transportation or funding, or it could be something like family and community attitudes. Social workers and mental health professionals can play a large part in helping remove those barriers by getting a good sense of who their patient is and focusing on the individual.

Person-directed planning advocates building an individual profile that is used to help develop a plan for each individual receiving services. It began as a philosophy of care and later developed a set of related activities for the full inclusion of individuals receiving mental health services as valued members of their community. It helps increase choice, avoids stigma, builds relationships, and creates individualized supports.

The workshop providers offered several examples of ways to more actively engage individuals in developing their recovery plan. By engaging individuals in their treatment in a person-directed manner, the service providers increase the potential for truly effective therapeutic relationships. Those relationships can result in meeting the needs and choices of individuals receiving services, helping to build the natural support system that will be required to maintain both mental and physical health of the individual, and to also potentially decrease the stigma experienced by the individual.

One aspect of this model that the Peer Support Specialists said was a vital part of their recovery was the concept of shared decision making – involving the individual being served in the treatment planning process. Shared decision making in mental health is being supported by SAMHSA as an evidence-based practice and one of the more effective strategies

for engaging individuals in their care. Many of the tools available from SAMHSA were shared with the audience.

"It was 15 years before someone said 'what do you want for your life?' to me," one of them said. "And that's the day I began my road to recovery."

Community Services Operations Manager Jennifer Giambrone related her own personal experience with an individual in the Community Living Program who worked to advocate for himself despite challenges in getting service providers to truly listen to his concerns about the side effects of a medication he was taking. There was a concern this individual would become noncompliant with his medication after leaving the program because of his complaints.

With further education and active consideration by the treatment team of shared decision making options, the client's issues were addressed to everyone's satisfaction.

The conference also discussed some of the tools that are already in place here at Mississippi State Hospital and in the community, such as WRAP and PACT.

WRAP is the Wellness Recovery Action Plan, an evidence-based practice that encourages individuals to think about their illnesses, identify problems that deter their recovery, and how they can avoid those problems. It involves their friends and families as well as giving them a familiar plan to fall back on if they feel begin to feel their recovery take a step back.

PACT is the Program of Assertive Community Treatment, a group of teams that goes to individuals' homes instead of having them come to the group. It gives a group of people a way to stay in touch and try to meet others' needs. PACT is currently available through two community mental health centers.

"It gives hope after the shock of diagnosis," a Peer Support Specialist said.

Person-centered planning, person-directed care, and mental health recovery are all terms that have been used nationally among mental health providers for several decades. There is a growing expectation for such a philosophical shift in service provision at all levels, as well as incorporation of treatment strategies that demonstrate that individuals are at the center of the treatment decisions.

Mississippi State Hospital will continue the implementation of Person-Directed Planning in the future. Look for more information about this transition in the future.

## ' . . . THEY ARE JUST BEAUTIFUL' SERENDIPITY DRAWS ALMOST 500 VISITORS

Nearly 500 people visited Mississippi State Hospital on Thursday, September 6 to see a unique and impressive show of art.

Serendipity, the annual silent auction and show of work created by patients of Mississippi State Hospital and residents of Jaquith Nursing Home, was an unqualified success this year. In addition to the hundreds of visitors, nearly every piece of work on display went home with someone, and some people walked away having won literally dozens of works of art during the silent bidding.

One of those people was Kostas Matheos. She had her eyes on the pottery all evening, and she won many of those ceramic pieces.

"I'm an art therapist, so I'm always looking at what local events are going on, and when I saw this I was definitely interested," said Kostas Matheos.

She liked what she saw, but even more impressive than the works she bid on, she said, was the fact that the artist who created them only has the use of one hand.

"He only has one hand, but he created these and they are just beautiful," Matheos said. "I'm just very appreciative that this show is here. You can see the heart and soul that goes into it."

She was attending Serendipity with her friend Ruth Ann Rigby. While Matheos is an art therapist with A Bridge to Recovery, an outpatient addiction treatment, her friend Rigby works at Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Services.

"I wanted to come and support the patients, because we love Mississippi State Hospital and the work they do," Rigby said.

Both of them have seen the quality of the art that can be created by those individuals struggling with their mental health. Even the word "serendipity" means the unexpected discovery of something good or fortunate.

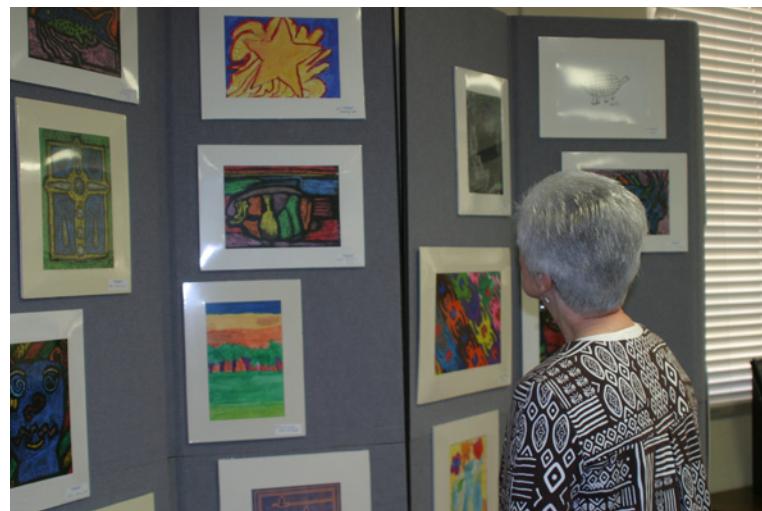
Patients and residents can find serendipity when they create a unique, valid, and beautiful work of art while taking part in Mississippi State Hospital's Art Services program. Visitors to the annual show can find serendipity when they see that artwork. It can be unexpected, but it also brings many people back year after year.

Elizabeth Spence is one visitor who has been coming to Serendipity for around five or six years.

"My mother told me about it, and it's a lot of fun," she said. "Somebody said it was the best-kept secret in Mississippi, and it really is. The artists are very talented, and you see the same bidders here year after year."

Many people do come back year after year, but they are still often surprised by the works on display. The variety and types of work in each show depend on the classes Mississippi State Hospital art instructors have taught throughout the year and, of course, on the experiences of the individuals creating the art.

"The artwork seems totally different this year from how it's been in the



Mississippi State Hospital, Inc.



past," Spence said.

Much of the work featured in this year's Serendipity was focused on animals – there were several cats in the show, prancing around or bounding about their mattes and frames in various styles, media, and colors. Some of the pieces that inspired bidders were of water wildlife, with fish, turtles, jellyfish, and aquariums.

"We got the piece that was in Mississippi Magazine," Spence said, referring to a painting of a poppy flower that appeared in print promoting the

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show. "We had bidding wars. I had to bid on it six or seven times."

She also picked up a few other pieces to go along with the poppy.

"These are going to go in my library. I'm a librarian, so I'm going to hang these up in my library," she said.

Her husband, Cary Spence, was there with her at Serendipity. He said his mother actually volunteered at the hospital when he was a boy and he has good memories of visiting the campus then, but this was his first year to come to the show.

"I love it. I love seeing other artists' perspective. I'm an artist too, and I enjoy getting to see other artists' perspective and work," he said.

He also said now that he's seen what is offered at Serendipity, he'll make sure to be back next year.

"I wouldn't miss it," he said.



## THE CHRISTMAS HOUSE IS ON ITS WAY TO BUILDING 71

While Mississippi State Hospital's Building 71 usually houses the Public Relations Conference Center all year long, it will soon be time for a change.

Every December, the building makes a transformation from the conference center into The Christmas House – the hub of all the many activities that take place on the MSH campus during the busy holiday season. Volunteer Services has been preparing for weeks for the dinners, parties, and other recreational events for patients that will be going on during the November and December holiday season. Throughout those two months, hundreds of volunteers will visit the campus to spend time with patients and residents, see the annual Christmas parade, or even to pass out presents dressed as Santa Claus.

"The holidays are a special time for everybody, and we want to make sure that they remain a special time for those being served through the hospital during that time of year," MSH Volunteer Services Director Sheila Shows said.

"We are thankful to have volunteers come from all over the state to spend time with our patients and residents to help make that happen. People come to the hospital as members of service clubs, Sunday school classes, and even just as families, but their visits mean a great deal to those individuals we serve."

Volunteers visit the hospital throughout the year, but November and December see a flurry of activities with the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. In addition to the volunteer-hosted parties, patient activities during that time of year include a Christmas parade, a Christmas program, and Santa Day.

A hallmark of the holidays at Mississippi State Hospital, the annual Christmas parade is held the first Friday of every December. This year it will be Dec. 7 at 10 a.m. on the hospital campus and it is open to anyone who would like to attend.

The lineup is still being finalized, but it will likely have some antique cars, bands, winners from beauty pageants and all kinds of floats. The theme for this year's parade is "Christmas Around the World," and Mississippi State Hospital employees will be making floats with the traditional decorations of their chosen locale, whether that's Noxapater, Mississippi or Paris, France.

Following the parade will be several weeks of Christmas parties for patients, with all the holiday activities culminating in Santa Day on Dec. 21. Santa Day sees several dozen volunteers, MSH employees, and elected officials gather at the hospital to dress in the traditional red Santa garb and hand out presents to each and every patient and resident at Mississippi State Hospital and Jaquith Nursing Home.

While that will be the end of the holiday activities at the hospital, the weeks leading up to that will have plenty of opportunities for those who would like to volunteer and spread some holiday cheer.

The Christmas House will open on Building 71 on the first of December. It's there that donations will be received, sorted, and prepared to be distributed on Santa Day. Though the cheerful holiday decorations



won't go up until then, groups will have been throwing holiday parties on the campus for several weeks by that point.

Shows said the holidays officially start for her on the first Sunday of each November, when two volunteer groups traditionally host the first parties of the season. They will be followed by many others.

"Many of the groups who host parties have been visiting the hospital for years," Shows said. "It's become a tradition for them, and it's a tradition that gets passed on as they bring their children and grandchildren with them to visit."

As Building 71 turns into The Christmas House, wreaths, ribbons, and other holiday decorations will go up on the building as it plays host to hundreds who come through it to bring gifts and donations. Those donations could be pajamas, slippers, games, puzzles, or clothes, but like the volunteers, they come from all over the state.

They are all sorted in The Christmas House, and an individual gift bag is packed for each patient and resident based on their needs or wants. The gifts will be delivered on Santa Day, and in the days leading up to that, other volunteer groups always guarantee that everyone at the hospital gets a share of fresh fruits and cakes they will also deliver shortly before Christmas.

"Anyone with the heart to volunteer is welcome to host a party at the hospital," Shows said. "We appreciate their service, but of course our patients and residents truly appreciate their efforts, especially just the generous gift of spending time with them during the holidays."

For more information and a Christmas House brochure, visit the Volunteer Services web page at <http://www.msh.state.ms.us/volunteerservices/vshome.htm>.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES CELEBRATES NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH



Dozens of Mississippi State Hospital employees and clients gathered at the Community Services Opportunity House on Friday, Sept. 28 to celebrate National Recovery Month, a national observance that educates Americans on the fact that those with a mental illness and/or substance use disorder can and do live healthy and rewarding lives.

The recognition aims each year to recognize the achievements made by those in recovery from these conditions, spreading the positive message that good mental health is essential to good overall health, that prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can and do recover.

Participants at Opportunity House on Friday morning had a full slate of activities, starting with a brief statement from Dr. Jennifer Giambrone, who read a proclamation from Jackson Mayor Harvey Johnson recognizing National Recovery Month.

"Recovery is an individual's unique and ongoing process or journey to have a meaningful and productive life," she read.

Mayor Johnson's proclamation went on to encourage all citizens to observe the month with appropriate activities supporting the theme of *Join the Voices of Recovery. It's Worth It.*

While there were fun games and activities planned, one of the most poignant aspects of the celebration was a banner that had been prepared and draped across one of the tables. In big purple letters painted across it, it said "What Recovery Means to Me." Throughout the morning, Community Services clients and employees walked over to the banner and wrote their own thoughts and feelings about what recovery meant to them.

Some of the comments were as simple as one single word, while other people wrote more of their thoughts out, but the feelings behind them were obvious with each statement written on the banner; they all reflected the hopes for a peaceful future in which the writers' lives were happy, healthy, independent and fulfilling.

"Opportunities" was one single word written in large print across the face of the banner. "Recovery means my life," said another one. "A new lifestyle. A change for a better future," read one other prominent statement.

While people were coming and going, taking their time to visit the banner and write their thoughts, others were enjoying the celebration and having a fun time with their friends and peers. They enjoyed the nice fall weather with card and bingo games outside, free snow cones, and a cookout.

Many people also got a chance to try something new with an introduction to line dancing. Staff and clients alike lined up to get some instructions – a few steps forward, a few steps backwards, a few swings of the hips or arms, and there was a full on line dance going on after just a few minutes.

While everyone at the Community Services Recovery Day celebration was able to have fun celebrating their recovery, substance abuse and mental health issues are still serious public health problems in Mississippi. Last year, an estimated 199,000 Mississippians needed treatment services for alcohol and drug use and more than 165,000 people needed treatment for a mental health issue.

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Mississippi has joined the nation in celebrating National Recovery Month, recognizing that recovery from substance abuse and mental health issues is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

To celebrate recovery, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) and the Mississippi Peer Support Specialist Network are launching the public awareness campaign Think Recovery. Over the next 11 months, all DMH certified providers will be encouraged to educate their staff on the 10 + 1 Components of Recovery.

These components include: Self-Direction, Individualized and Person-Centered, Empowerment, Holistic, Non-Linear, Strengths-Based, Peer Support, Respect, Responsibility, Hope, and Resiliency.

Behavioral health is an essential part of overall health. Most people don't think twice about seeking treatment for diabetes, asthma, high blood pressure or other health conditions. People should seek treatment for substance abuse and mental health with the same urgency as they would any other health condition. Recovery not only benefits the individual, it benefits the entire community.



If you or someone you know is in need of services and supports, call the DMH 24 hour-a-day, 7 days a week at 1-877-210-8513 or visit [www.dmh.ms.gov](http://www.dmh.ms.gov). For more information about Think Recovery, visit [www.dmh.ms.gov](http://www.dmh.ms.gov).



JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY

# It's Worth It

ACCEPTANCE  
GRATITUDE UNDERSTANDING  
LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBLE  
NEW CELEBRATE GROW

National Recovery Month  
Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover  
september 2012

A vertical poster for National Recovery Month. The top half is pink with the slogan "JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY" and "It's Worth It". Below this, a purple section features the word "ACCEPTANCE" in large letters, with "GRATITUDE UNDERSTANDING" and "LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBLE" listed below it. At the bottom, the words "NEW CELEBRATE GROW" are written vertically. The bottom half is purple with white text for "National Recovery Month" and the month "september 2012". A small note at the bottom says "Prevention Works • Treatment is Effective • People Recover".

## MISSISSIPPI CONTINUES TO CELEBRATE RECOVERY

While National Recovery Month was recognized nationally in September, the Mississippi Department of Mental Health is continuing to celebrate recovery and the strides made by those living with mental illnesses.

Throughout the next year, DMH programs will be highlighting the various components of recovery and sharing stories of success from individuals who are in recovery and living successful lives in the community.

One of those success stories belongs to Chris Marcell. A resident of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Marcell may already be familiar to some Mississippi State Hospital and DMH employees. He told his inspiring story of recovery at this year's annual Legislative Appreciation Breakfast in February, and is the president of the Gulf Coast affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

He has also had some of his artwork selected for NARSAD Artworks, a non-profit, volunteer organization that showcases museum-quality artwork by artists whose lives have all been touched by mental illness.

Marcell painted "Bird in a Tree" while he was receiving inpatient treatment at Mississippi State Hospital in 2007. He said the painting reflects his love for original singing and the strong feelings he had about his hospitalization; feelings that he was fragile, beautiful, yet institutionalized.

In his painting, a small bird is momentarily perched on a branch of a much larger natural complex—the tree. This metaphor has proved to become the new definition of his life in recovery and management of mental illness since his return to the residential community in spring of 2008.

A native of Seattle, Washington, Marcell pulled in to the Mississippi Gulf Coast in January of 2000 after traveling across the country trying his best to ignite a road tour rock music career. Prior to arriving in Mississippi, he had studied theater and dance in college in Seattle. After that he went into drumming, and in 1991 he "brilliantly," as he put it, decided to remake his performance persona into that of a rock musician.

However, along with his mental health diagnosis, Marcell has a co-occurring condition of drug and alcohol abuse. Despite his inspiration to create original words and music, creativity, and flashes of spirit, he had had a difficult and intermittent journey in the arts, and was eventually hospitalized.

While receiving treatment at MSH, Marcell took Art Therapy and Music Therapy classes as part of the rigorous curriculum of educational, rehabilitative, and recovery-oriented classes taught by specialists, nurses, therapists, and counselors. In addition to those classes the patients are given the opportunity to experience spirituality, which Marcell said had an impact on him.

"I was given a chance to grasp the basic concept of using 'WISE MIND'; the opportunity to experience guided meditation; and all the while receiving specific information about mental health diagnosis and recovery principles," Marcell said.

"I took hospitalization as open mindedly as I could at the time. I am grateful to the Mississippi Department of Mental Health for caring for me when I could not care for myself."



He has since become involved with National Alliance on Mental Illness Mississippi (NAMI). Marcell has been trained to provide peer support through the programs of NAMI — a grassroots, non-profit organization which provides education, support and advocacy for persons who have mental health diagnosis. NAMI provides services for family members, caregivers, providers, and professionals as well.

"NAMI is a key psychosocial experience in my journey of recovery," Marcell said. "In fact, NAMI is the largest grassroots organization helping people with mental illness in the nation. I am challenged to function responsibly and with a high degree of credibility through this organization. It is linked to my future," he said. "And, it's family friendly!"

Chris Marcell has become a new man and a new artist over the past five years. He has ceased using drugs and alcohol and participates in the 12 Step Fellowship with the help of a sponsor. He is in active recovery making and maintaining progress.

A very creative person, Marcell has had dreams of being a serious artist for a long time.

"To have my painting shown is a wonderful credit!" he exclaims. "It inspires me to produce another work of art!"

Look for more information about recovery and success stories over the next year as DMH introduces its "Think Recovery" campaign.

If you or someone you know is in need of services and supports, call the DMH 24 hour-a-day, 7 days a week at 1-877-210-8513 or visit [www.dmh.ms.gov](http://www.dmh.ms.gov). For more information about Think Recovery, visit [www.dmh.ms.gov](http://www.dmh.ms.gov).