



MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

P.O. Box 157-A, Whitfield, MS 39193
Phone (601) 351-8018 Fax (601) 351-8364
www.msh.state.ms.us

For Immediate Release

January 15, 2010

Contact: Adam Moore (601) 351-8262, adam.moore@msh.state.ms.us

MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL PREPARES FOR LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

WHITFIELD—Mississippi State Hospital staff, Department of Mental Health employees and legislators from all over the state will be gathering next month for the Annual Legislative Appreciation Breakfast.

Sponsored by Friends of Mississippi State Hospital, the breakfast will be Tuesday, Feb. 2 at 7:30 a.m. at Galloway United Methodist Church, located at 305 N. Congress Street in Jackson. MSH and DMH employees will gather to honor and thank state legislators for their continued support. Leadership from Department of Mental Health facilities, community mental health centers, and other non-profit organizations across the state usually attend the breakfast.

“It is a great way to let the legislature know what the needs of the Department of Mental Health are, and to showcase all the good work that has been done,” said Ray Wallace, president of the Friends organization.

It takes a lot of community support, donations and volunteer hours to make that happen, and the breakfast is simply their way of saying “thank you” to many of the legislators who support the hospital.

“It is an opportunity to connect and help the legislators to put a face with a name and for us to do the same,” Wallace said.

This year may offer a brief respite from the recent bitter cold. The theme will have a welcome glimpse of warmer climates, with palm trees, beach balls and a group of Mississippi State Hospital and Jaquith Nursing Home staff and residents performing as “The Dreamers,” a Beach Boys-esque singing group.

Mississippi Department of Mental Health Executive Director Ed LeGrand will speak briefly during the breakfast, as will MSH Director James Chastain and Friends board members Joel Ross and Shane Hariel.

A non-profit charity organization dedicated to promoting the work of the hospital and informing the public about mental illness, Friends helps enhance the quality of life for MSH patients by offering a variety of programs and events for patients, Jaquith Nursing Home residents and individuals served in the community.

The Legislative Appreciation Breakfast originally came about through the hard work of former Friends president Gladys Jackson and former MSH Director James Stubbs, who served as director from 1975 to 1988.

“This was their special way of thanking our state legislators for their continued support of the hospital and the Department of Mental Health,” Friends office manager Sheila Shows said. “That tradition has continued for more than 20 years, and we’re glad to be able to show our appreciation.”

Since its inception in 1985, Friends of MSH has grown to a dedicated and caring membership of 575 individuals from the hospital staff and support personnel, members of civic and service groups, family members of patients, and individuals from communities in nearly every county served by MSH.

The organization dedicates 100 percent of its funds to support a variety of programs and activities, such as an annual patient fishing rodeo, watermelon cutting, an Independence Day fireworks celebration educational field trips and employee recognition programs.

For more information, contact Mississippi State Hospital Public Relations Department at (601) 351-8018, or visit the MSH web site at www.msh.state.ms.us.

MSH, a facility of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and 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. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.

- 30 -

PHOTO ATTACHED: Mississippi legislators, Friends of Mississippi State Hospital members and more make their way down the line at last year’s Annual Legislative Appreciation Breakfast. Sponsored by Friends of MSH, the event is their way of thanking legislators for their hard work and continued support of Mississippi State Hospital.