



# MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL

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## **For Immediate Release**

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### **PARTNERSHIP WITH MAGNOLIA COSMETOLOGY COLLEGE BENEFITS MISSISSIPPI STATE HOSPITAL PATIENTS**

WHITFIELD — A generous offer from a local business is giving some Mississippi State Hospital patients a great new opportunity.

Magnolia College of Cosmetology has offered a discount on services for several ladies who are receiving care at Mississippi State Hospital. Though it seems like a small thing for many people who may have that opportunity every day, it makes a big difference for the ladies who are receiving inpatient care at the hospital. A trip to the salon not only lets them spend more time in the community, but a visit to a salon and a stylist does wonders to lift their spirits and boost their self-esteem.

“Magnolia College of Cosmetology wants to reach out to the community and lend a helping hand, and show that we want to be out there,” Salon Manager Kathy McMurtry said. “So when this chance came, I jumped at it. This was a great opportunity.”

McMurtry had some previous experience that helped her understanding of just how a trip like this could be a great opportunity for someone who doesn’t often get chances like it.

“Mrs. Rutha Henderson called me and asked if we could get together and talk about the possibility of providing this service for these ladies,” McMurtry said. “I said ‘why of course,’ because I used to work in behavioral health services too, so I understood what something like this could mean for the patients.

“I did volunteer work with a behavioral health service, working with their clients on some lifestyle skills. I worked with them for a couple of years, teaching some things like cooking, laundry, sewing and other life skills like that.”

Rutha Henderson, whom McMurtry mentioned, is a nurse at Mississippi State Hospital who works with these ladies every day. Though this trip resulted from her efforts, at first it was actually part of an effort to promote healthy eating habits and money management skills. Henderson was looking for ways their patients could responsibly spend money besides simply eating out or buying snacks.

As McMurtry mentioned, her volunteer experience gave her an idea of how important an outing like this could be. She said she saw its positive effects by the time the ladies were all leaving, since there were smiles all around.

“We did shampoos and conditions, shampoo sets and flatirons, and a roller set too,” McMurtry said. “I think they really enjoyed themselves.”

Magnolia College of Cosmetology has three different buildings as part of its complex on I-55. It includes the salon as well as an administrative building and a classroom building. The salon is open for appointments and walk-ins, and the work is completed by students at the school. It’s a good opportunity for the students to learn the ins and outs of their trade and get experience beyond the classroom.

Marcia Williams of Jackson was the instructor for the students who were performing the styling, and she said it was a good experience all around. They did a full client consultation with one of the hospital patients, who wasn’t shy about letting them know exactly how she wanted her hair styled.

“She knew what she wanted, so the student and I were able to get some feedback, and follow on with her instructions. She let us know, and that’s what we wanted to hear, and she was very happy when she left,” Williams said.

Dr. Kay Desai with Mississippi State Hospital said the trip to the salon, and future outings that are planned, are good for her patients.

“They get to plan and prepare for the trip and have choices regarding their beauty needs,” she said. “It not only improves their socialization and money management skills, but it heightens their self-esteem as well.”

With a touch of humor though, she also noted the reason why they first began looking for additional opportunities for these ladies.

“As an added benefit,” she said with a smile, “now they will not spend too much money on unhealthy snacks but save some for the salon trip.”

*MSH, a program 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 and utilizing a range of psychiatric and medical services that reflect the accepted standard of care and are in compliance with statutory and regulatory guidelines. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.*

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#### **PHOTO ATTACHED:**

**Magnolia College of Cosmetology recently partnered with Mississippi State Hospital to offer discounted services to MSH patients. Pictured are (l to r) student WaLeisha Strickland of Jackson, instructor Marcia Williams of Jackson, student Melissa Rawson of Richland, student DeLaysia Robinson of Jackson, and salon manager Kathy McMurtry of Ridgeland.**