



Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.



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From the Director. . .



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson
Executive Director

Looking forward to the New Year.....

At the end of December, everyone is excited about the upcoming new year. Some see the new year as a "fresh" start and look forward to it with adoration, delight and joy. Wikipedia defines New Year's resolution as a tradition, most common in the Western Hemisphere in which a person resolves to change an undesired trait of behavior, to accomplish a personal goal or otherwise improve their life.

The following programs that GTPDD maintain will improve lives:

1. Personal Care Attendant (PCA) Program—an individual can receive services such as light housekeeping, cooking, bathing and/or running errands.
2. Respite Program—a client can have someone come into the home and relieve the 24-hours caregiver.
3. Home-Delivered Meal Program—a citizen may receive five (5) frozen meals each week in his/her home.
4. Pharmacy-individuals receive their medications monthly delivered to the home.

Looking toward the year 2019 is a time to set goals and to lend a hand to those in our community who have needs and struggles. This hand may just be a phone call away by contacting the GTPDD and helping set up assistance for someone who has needs that aren't being met.

The GTPDD family wishes you a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. We look forward to hearing from you this next year and allowing us to assist those in need.

Please call 662-324-7860, ext. 1159 to be directed to the correct department for assistance.



Notice!!!

North Mississippi Medical Center will terminate its provider network with Humana Medicare advantage plans effective Jan. 1, 2019.

A recent announcement by North Mississippi Medical Center stating they would no longer accept Humana Medicare Advantage Plans at any of their affiliate medical facilities makes the recent change to Medicare Advantage enrollment/disenrollment even more important to our area. This change could potentially impact 8,500 individuals in the north Mississippi area who receive their healthcare benefits from this company. If you are a North Mississippi patient and do not know how this might impact you, please contact your provider for more information.

Change to Medicare Advantage Annual Enrollment Period

If you are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, you can leave your plan and return to Original Medicare between January 1 and March 31 each year and buy a Part D prescription drug plan to supplement your Original Medicare. You also have the option to switch to a different Medicare Advantage plan during this time. This is a change from the “disenrollment only” option available in 2018.

From 2011 to 2018 there was no option to switch to a different Medicare Advantage plan except during the fall open enrollment period unless you had a circumstance that allowed for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) such as moving out of the plan's service area. There is also a SEP that allows movement back to Original Medicare if you were previously enrolled in a Medigap plan and are within the one-year trial period of your first enrollment into a Medicare Advantage Plan. The 21st Century Cures Act (section 17005) expands the window from one and a half months to three months starting in 2019. It allows not only disenrollment from an Advantage plan but allows you to switch from one Advantage Plan to another without any special circumstance.

Only one switch during this timeframe is allowed each year. You can change your mind multiple times during the enrollment period in the fall, but you can only switch to a different Medicare Advantage plan (or back to Original Medicare) once in the first quarter of the new year (2019). If you sign up for a Medicare Advantage plan in the fall and decide you don't like it once it takes effect in January, you have until the end of March to make a change. This does NOT give you guaranteed entry back to Medigap insurance if you have left that coverage when you enrolled in the Medicare Advantage Plan.

You can only sign up for Part D coverage during the first three months of the year if you're switching from a Medicare Advantage plan back to Original Medicare. You cannot, for example, be enrolled in Original Medicare with a Part D plan and switch to a different Part D plan during the January – March enrollment period. That election can only be made during the fall open enrollment period (October 15 - December 7).

If you have questions or need assistance making changes please contact Sharon Duke, SHIP Coordinator at GTPDD – 662-324-3309

The Town of Artesia, Mississippi

received funding from the Mississippi Development Authority through the Community Development Block Grant Program for improvements to the present sewer system. The \$450,000.00 grant is being administered by the Golden Triangle Planning and Development District. The following is a description of the activities involved in final completion:

The sewer lines were inspected by camera to locate points of entry of surface water and broken lines. Repairs included: (1) in place pipe line repair, (2) point repair, and (3) man-hole repair, as needed. The pump station on Front Street was rehabilitated to handle the larger flows contributing to sewage overflow. The improvements also included extending service to four (4) new customers.

The Publically Owned Treatment Works (POTW) lagoon dike damage was corrected with the best practices for erosion control put into place. A floating rotating biological contactor (RBC) and aerator was installed at the lagoon to treat the wastewater to the new permitted limits. The POTW wetland was also upgraded with new plants and clean gravel.



2018 Mississippi Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program

Governor Phil Bryant recently announced that the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) has approved FY18 Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program projects. Applications prepared by Golden Triangle Planning and Development District staff which received funding are:

Clay County Access Road Improvements	\$150,000
Town of Caledonia Lighting Improvements	\$120,000
Town of Maben Industrial Building Improvements	\$ 50,000
Town of Mantee Road Improvements	\$ 85,000

This year the Mississippi Legislature authorized \$5 million in general obligation bonds to be issued for the grant program. Municipalities with a maximum population of 10,000 and counties with a maximum population of 30,000 are eligible applicants. The maximum grant award is \$150,000 and eligible projects must be for publicly owned infrastructure and public buildings improvements. Priority is given to projects that are directly related to economic development, promote job creation and capital investment.

Medicaid Waiver



Christmas is a joyous time of the year for Case Managers! From the beginning of the Medicaid Waiver program, Golden Triangle Planning and Development District, Inc. has provided gifts for clients at Christmas.

Many clients do not have family or friends with whom to share Christmas. First, Case Managers select food items, warm clothes, blankets, and other household goods. Then, they box the items for delivery to clients.

Among the Case Managers, the consensus of opinion is that words cannot describe the feelings of joy they experience when giving the clients gifts. Christmas is about spreading joy, hope, and kindness. The Case Managers feel blessed to know that they have made a difference in the lives of these seniors.

The Medicaid Waiver Program continues to serve over 1,400 clients in the Golden Triangle area. Area services include: personal care services, in-home respite services, and home-delivered meals. Case Managers make monthly visits to clients' homes to determine if the clients are receiving all the services for which they are eligible. If you know of anyone who may need this service, please call 662-320-2003.



Reasons to Celebrate

Throughout the year people experience personal triumphs, as well as work related successes. Sometimes a celebration of those accomplishments fails to occur. The beginning of 2019 seems a good time to reflect on the accomplishments that were made this past year. The WIOA program has witnessed many outstanding participants take responsibility for their own lives, take advantage of the youth training program, and move forward toward a more successful, positive future.

Here are two examples of WIOA participants who deserve congratulations and celebration.

Staff of the Counseling to Career Program wish to celebrate and offer congratulations to two outstanding youth.

SHANEQUE: Shaneque came to the office in September 2017 to pick up an application for the Counseling to Career Program. First impression, I was skeptical about her motivation to be a positive for the program. She was not dressed properly and was pregnant. Keeping in mind the goals of the program and her seeming desire to participate, we accepted her.

She took the WorkKeys and passed, receiving a Bronze CRC.* During work ethics training, Shaneque was on time for all but one class and only had to miss once. She promptly made up the missed class the day after scheduled classes ended. Even though transportation was a serious barrier for her, she completed her internship with no issues; and her supervisor was very pleased with her performance.

After her internship was completed, there were a couple of months that I was not able to get in touch with her. Starting at the end of January, Shaneque faithfully kept me updated on her status. She did not go to work after her internship mainly due to her pregnancy and transportation issues, but she was thoughtful enough to give me phone number changes and updates on her life. She gave birth to her son in April and sent pictures. She even came by the office shortly after he was born. Shaneque began diligently searching for a job as soon as she received her medical release. She was so determined to find employment and provide for her child, which was a reflection of the change the C2C program seemed to make in her. She said, "Ms. Myra, I am not giving up!" And, she didn't! It took a few months, but from her updates I knew she was actively filling out applications and searching for a job opportunity. That diligent search paid off. She found a job and continues to be employed after several months. She seems so happy with the job and being able to provide for her growing son. I tell my participants that first impressions are very important and they are; but I am proud to say that my first impression of Shaneque is not the same impression I have at the end of her internship or during her follow-up.

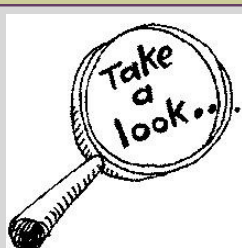
As we often hear, our work program is a hand-up program, not a hand-out program. Shaneque is a perfect example of an individual who took advantage of all we had to offer, applied it to her situation, and is experiencing a better life because of it. Well done, Shaneque!!!

TASHERRAH: Tasherrah entered the program in early March of 2018. She was very articulate and had graduated from Starkville High School in May 2012. She had a one year old daughter of whom she seemed very proud. Tasherrah had worked at several different jobs but she did not stay employed very long at any place of employment. She expressed a desire to get into the medical field but at that time she had not been able to focus and get her life back on that pathway. She came to us hoping we could help her refocus and start back on a positive track. After taking the WorkKeys, she was basic skills deficient. Throughout the program she worked hard to improve her skills and all that determination paid off. She re-tested and gained a Silver CRC.

Tasherrah was an excellent C2C participant. She was always on time for class and was usually early. She actively participated in class discussions and willingly shared her life experiences, both good and bad. She had to miss one class but made it up at the end of the session. Tasherrah began her internship at CATO in April. She received an excellent evaluation and was hired part time at the completion of her internship. Tasherrah was not finished however! She attended C.N.A. classes at Millsaps Career and Technology Center in Starkville and graduated November 7th, 2018. She continues to work part time at CATO and will soon be taking her state board to get her C.N.A. license.

We are so proud of all Tasherrah has accomplished since she walked through the GTPDD doors in March 2018; and we can't wait to see her accomplishments in the future.

*CRC is a career readiness certificate.



at the
GTPDD
website to
view the
2018-2021
CEDs

Golden Triangle
Planning & Development District
P. O. Box 828
106 Miley Drive
Starkville, MS 39760

Phone: 662-324-7860
Fax: 662-324-7328
E-mail: gtpdd.com

OCTOBER

Dave Alexander	10 years
Melody Bensend	20 years
Nora Carroll	20 years
Stacey Elkins	07 years
Martie Gibson	19 years
Aldean Ivy	20 years
Charlene Jones	13 years
Hardie Jordan	20 years
Lucille Mosley	06 years
Joanne Peterson	25 years
Diana Prince	07 years
Annie Sanders	20 years
Lauren Smith	18 years

Staff Anniversaries

Staff members that
have served at least
5 years at the
GTPDD.

NOVEMBER

Beverly Baker	15 years
Mary Byron	17 years
Glenda Fason	11 years
Shirley Forrester	09 years
Jessica Foxx	18 years
Beatrice Logan	17 years
Lindsay Marsh	06 years
Michelle Milner	14 years
Elberta Phillips	26 years
Cynthia Reese	06 years

DECEMBER

Jackie Byas	11 years
Hazel Cunningham	10 years
Isadora Davis	07 years
George Edmonds	05 years
Rachel Embry	10 years
Maria McNutt	15 years

Best Wishes!

Eupora Nutrition Site celebrated Nora Carroll's retirement with family and friends after 20 years with the Golden Triangle PDD. Ms. Carroll has been an outstanding employee and will be greatly missed at the Nutrition Site. The GTPDD would like to take this time to congratulate Ms. Carroll and great wishes of a long and happy retirement!

