

GOLDEN TRIANGLE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.

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Director's Message

As we move forward in 2024, the GTPDD staff continues to grow and improve with new staff members.

Our recent additions to the team include Tony Green and Isaac Santitto, as well as Tammie McGarr who will join us in July.

Tony Green joined us out of retirement to bring his skills in governmental accounting to the position of governmental specialist. Before retirement, he worked for the North Central Planning and Development District.

Isaac Santitto has begun his professional career as a fiscal officer on our staff. He recently received his bachelor's in accounting from Alcorn State University.



*Executive
Director
Rupert L.
"Rudy"
Johnson*

Tammie McGarr will join us as our new chief financial officer. She previously served as CFO at the Starkville-Oktibbeha Consolidated School District and has years of experience in auditing.

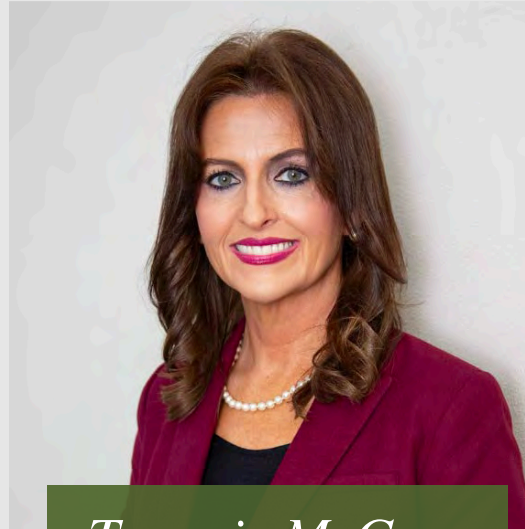
With our new staff, we can continue to help our counties in areas such as auditing, budgeting and more. We wish the best to our new staff!

STAFF UPDATES



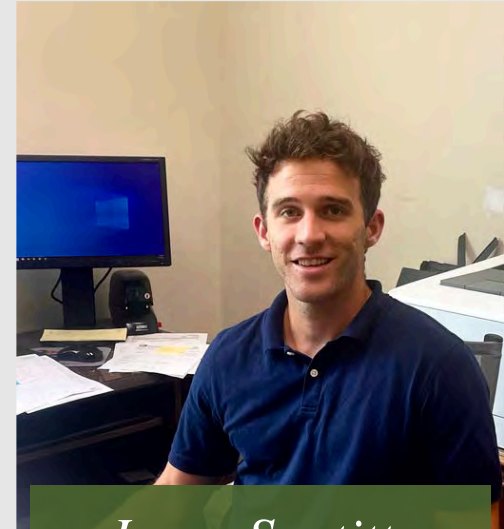
Tony Green

Tony Green recently joined our staff as a governmental specialist, bringing over 20 years of experience in governmental accounting.



Tammie McGarr

Tammie McGarr will be joining our staff in July as CFO. She joins us in this position with previous experience as a CFO and her expertise in auditing.



Isaac Santitto

Isaac Santitto recently joined our staff as a fiscal officer, following his graduation from Alcorn State University with a bachelor's in accounting.

We are so thankful for our talented staff!

CDBG PROJECTS/ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Mississippi Development Authority has received an allocation of \$24,000,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for the FY2024 Community Development Block Grant program. This program provides funding for public infrastructure improvements with water and sewer needs having the greatest priority. The minimum threshold requirements are at least 51% of the project beneficiaries are of low and moderate income, and applicants must have no open Public Facility (Regular or Small Government) grants. Public Facilities applications were due May 13-17, 2024.

GTPDD staff submitted applications for the following projects:

Applicants:	Project Description:	Funds Requested:
Town of Artesia	Wastewater improvements	\$600,000
City of Macon	Wastewater improvements	\$600,000
City of Starkville	Wastewater improvements	\$750,000

2024**ADVISORY****COMMITTEE****MEETINGS****CHOCTAW: 7/15, 10 A.M., BOS BOARDROOM CRTHOUSE****CLAY: 7/3, 11 A.M., CRTHOUSE CRTROOM, 2ND FLOOR****LOWNDES: 7/10, 9:30 A.M., GARDNER BLVD BUILDING****NOXUBEE: 7/9, 9 A.M., CIVIC CENTER****OKTIBBEHA: 7/15, 8:15 A.M., CRTHOUSE SUP. BOARDROOM****WEBSTER: 7/15, 11:45 A.M., BOS BOARDROOM CRTHOUSE****WINSTON: 7/1, 1 P.M., CRTHOUSE CRTROOM, 2ND FLOOR**

WEIR IMPLEMENTS SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

The town of Weir received a \$450,000 Community Development Block Grant to make needed repairs to the existing Weir Municipal Sewer System. The sewer system was originally built in the late '50s and '60s and needs some general updates and repairs. These improvements are being implemented by cleaning and videoing the existing sewer lines to determine what repairs it will take to bring them back into full service.



After videoing, they can determine a method for upgrading and refurbishing the current sewer line. These methods include: (1) Poured in Place, (2) Liner Installation and (3) Point Repairs. These pictures show a crew of the sewer contractor using the video truck and line cleaner to determine what method is best for refurbishing a sewer main on Ann Street in Weir.



FAIR HOUSING MONTH

On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The 1968 act expanded on previous acts and prohibited discrimination concerning the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, sex, (and as amended) handicap and family status. Title VIII of the Act is also known as the Fair Housing Act (1968).

The enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act on April 11, 1968, came only after a long and difficult journey. From 1966-1967, Congress regularly considered the bill, but they failed to garner a strong enough majority for its passage. However, when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, President Johnson utilized this national tragedy to urge for the bill's speedy Congressional approval. Since the 1966 open housing marches in Chicago, Dr. King's name had been closely associated with the fair housing legislation. President Johnson viewed the act as a fitting memorial to the man's life work and wished to have the act passed prior to Dr. King's funeral in Atlanta.

Another significant issue during this time period was the growing casualty list from Vietnam. The deaths in Vietnam fell heaviest upon young, poor Black and Hispanic infantrymen. However, on the home front, these men's families could not purchase or rent homes in certain residential developments on account of their race or national origin. Specialized organizations like the NAACP, the GI Forum and the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing lobbied for the Senate to pass the Fair Housing Act and remedy this inequity. Senators Edward Brooke and Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts argued for the passage of this legislation. In particular, Senator Brooke, the first African American to be elected to the Senate by popular vote, spoke personally of his return from World War II and the inability to provide a home of his choice for his new family because of his race.



FAIR HOUSING MONTH

With the cities rioting after Dr. King's assassination, and destruction mounting in every part of the U.S., the words of President Johnson and Congressional leaders rang the Bell of Reason for the House of Representatives, who subsequently passed the Fair Housing Act. Without debate, the Senate followed the House in its passage of the act, which President Johnson then signed into law.

The power to appoint the first officials administering the act fell upon President Johnson's successor, Richard Nixon. President Nixon tapped Governor George Romney of Michigan for the post of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. While serving as governor, Secretary Romney had successfully campaigned for ratification of a state constitutional provision that prohibited discrimination in housing. President Nixon also appointed Samuel Simmons as the first Assistant Secretary for Equal Housing Opportunity.

When April 1969 arrived, HUD could not wait to celebrate the act's first anniversary. Within that inaugural year, HUD completed the Title VIII Field Operations Handbook and instituted a formalized complaint process. In truly festive fashion, HUD hosted a gala event in the Grand Ballroom of New York's Plaza Hotel. From across the nation, advocates and politicians shared in this marvelous evening, including the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing, one of the organizations that started it all.

In subsequent years, the tradition of celebrating Fair Housing Month grew larger. Governors began to issue proclamations that designated April as Fair Housing Month, and schools across the country sponsored poster and essay contests that focused upon fair housing issues. Regional winners from these contests often enjoyed trips to Washington, DC for events with HUD and their Congressional representatives.

Under former Secretaries James T. Lynn and Carla Hills, with the cooperation of the National Association of Homebuilders, National Association of Realtors and the American Advertising Council, these groups adopted fair housing as their theme and provided "free" billboard space throughout the nation. These large 20-foot by 14-foot billboards placed the fair housing message in neighborhoods, industrial centers, agrarian regions and urban cores. Every region also had its own celebrations, meetings, dinners, contests and radio-television shows that featured HUD, state and private fair housing experts and officials. These celebrations continue the spirit behind the original passage of the act and are remembered fondly by those who were there from the beginning.
(Source: HUD)

WIOA GATEWAY PROGRAM: A SUCCESS STORY

James is 18 years old and a 2024 graduate of Eupora High School in the Webster County School District. He was a participant in the WIOA Gateway Program, enrolling March 2024. Prior to enrolling, he had never held a public job for pay, but he did have experience working with his dad on vehicles. When talking with him during his WIOA orientation, he expressed interest in becoming a utility lineman.

While in essential job skills training, he was successful in obtaining his CDL permit, getting him one step closer to being accepted into the utility lineman technology program. Knowing the benefit of on-the-job experience, he expressed a desire to intern with a local utility company. Working together with his career and technology counselor and the high school career coach, we were able to get him an internship with Natchez Trace Power and Electric.

Through the internship, he received valuable on-the-job training and the opportunity to spend time in the onsite training facility learning how to operate machinery and safely climb light poles. This training also gave him the real-life experience he needed to know he would be happy with his chosen career.



James

WIOA GATEWAY PROGRAM: A SUCCESS STORY

At the completion of the WIOA Gateway internship, James said that the internship was beneficial, and he enjoyed the experience. He is ready to make his career goal a reality. He has been accepted into the EMCC Utility Line Worker Technology program for fall 2024. After successful completion of the one semester program, James will be prepared for entry-level line work with electrical and construction companies. The WIOA staff is proud of all that James accomplished as a participant and looks forward to following his progress as he continues working toward his career goal.



The WIOA Gateway In-School Program serves juniors and seniors enrolled in high schools in Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Winston and Webster counties. Participants receive six hours of essential job skills training before being placed in a paid internship in their local community. Each participant has a career counselor who works with them to help them reach their career goal, whether that be continued education/training, employment or military enlistment. If you know a dependable young person who would like to take advantage of this opportunity, please contact Mitzi Lawrence at 662-324-5007.

SENIOR ENRICHMENT CENTERS



Columbus center visitors participated in the first line dancing session since the COVID-19 pandemic. We owe a thank you to Sue Anderson for volunteering her time and talents to lead this group!

The Columbus center also received a major donation of yarn, fabric and knitting books from Linda Snead. The knitting and crochet groups were elated at all of this new material to use. We always appreciate it when the community thinks of us when they downsize, move or just want to support us.



The Starkville center's bridge group joined together for yet another exciting, intense game. We love to host these ladies for a good time!

HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED ELDERLY AND DISABLED WAIVER PROGRAM

What is it?

The Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Waiver is a statewide program designed to offer assistance to qualified Medicaid beneficiaries. The program allows qualified individuals to remain in a home or community-based setting as an alternative to nursing facility care or other institutional care.

What are the qualifications?

1. Beneficiaries must be 21 years of age or older;
2. Medicaid eligible;
3. Require the same level of care as someone applying for admission to a nursing facility.

Contact our Medicaid Waiver Office:
662-320-2003.

What services are offered under this waiver?

- **Case Management:** Everyone who participates in the waiver is assigned to a local case management team. This team consists of a Registered Nurse and Licensed Social Worker. They are responsible for managing and coordinating the services for each participant.
- **Personal Care Services (PCS):** These are supportive services provided in the home of the participant. They include assistance with light housekeeping, laundry, meal preparation, bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and activities of daily living.
- **Adult Day Services:** This is a structured program that focuses on the strengths and abilities of the participant. This service allows participants to contact connections with their community and/or use all of their retained skills. Depending on the specific facility, the following services are provided: supervision and/or assistance with ADLs, group activities, nutritious meals and medication monitoring.
- **Home Delivered Meals:** A well-balanced meal is delivered to the home of the person who is unable to leave their home without assistance and/or is unable to prepare their own meals.
- **Institutional Respite and/or In-Home Respite:** This is provided to participants on a short-term basis because of the absence of or need for relief for the primary care giver. This can be provided in the home or other licensed respite care centers.

Medicaid Waiver RNs and LSWs:

Oktibbeha:

#1: Tina McWhorter, RN
Andrea Wright, LSW
#2: Jennifer Grantham, LSW
#3: Paige Winfield, RN
Christina Free, LSW
#4: Krystal Taylor, RN
Megan Aucoin, LSW

Lowndes:

#1: Angela Whitaker, RN
#2: Cindy Reese, RN
Tennie Simpson, LSW
#3: Lindsey Livingston, RN
Angelia Sansing, LSW

Noxubee:

#1: Rachael Unruh, RN
Jennifer Bridges, LSW
#2: Tammy Castle, RN
Kallie Hubbard, LSW

Webster:

Sydney Thompson, RN
Lisa Woods, LSW

Choctaw:

Tina Gill, RN
Kaylee Hunt, LSW

Clay:

Mitzi Phelps, RN
Lesa Wilson, LSW

Winston:

Kim Mills, RN
Lauren Smith, LSW

Staff Anniversaries: 5+ Years

April

Rupert "Rudy" Johnson	34
Janet Macon	22
Keisha Warren	20
Wendy Murphree	19
Catherine Dyson	12
Gertrue Weatherspoon	10
Debra Hill	06
John Bauer	06

May

Toby Sanford	20
Lesa Wilson	20
Queenzella Gibson	19
Teshia Taylor	17
Katy Douglas	07
Glenn Spitler	07
Landen Upchurch	06
Felicia Cork	05
Valeria Jones	05

June

Tina McWhorter	24
Minnie Lindsey	20
Lena Davis	18
Sharon Duke	18
Tina Gill	13
Sheila Winters	13
Dana Dawkins	10
Tennie Simpson	08
Willie Williams	07

CONTACTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA



Main Office: 662-324-7860

Pharmacy: 662-320-2011

Aging: 662-320-2001

Solid Waste: 1-800-217-6909



Main Office:
gtpdd@gtpdd.com

Pharmacy:
PharmHIT@gtpdd.com



@GTrianglePDD



Main Office: 662-324-7328

Pharmacy: 662-320-2004

The GTPDD is online at www.gtpdd.com.



GOLDEN TRIANGLE

Planning and Development District, Inc.