

# GOLDEN TRIANGLE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.

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### DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This quarter has been full of crucial progress across our seven counties.

In June, we were honored to host the Mississippi Municipal League's orientation for newly elected municipal officials. We were happy to welcome new leaders and help connect them with the resources and support they'll need to serve their communities.

We also celebrated more success stories through the Gateway program, including Nakiya—whose story is a reminder of the resilience and potential in our youth.

Construction recently began on the East Mile Half Road project in West Point, an improvement that will benefit local industry, education and public safety.

I want to thank our hardworking staff, especially those marking



DIRECTOR RUPERT L. "RUDY" JOHNSON

milestone anniversaries, and recognize them for supporting our youth, seniors, infrastructure and so much more across our communities.

I celebrated 35 years of service myself to the GTPDD, and it's been an absolute pleasure to help those around me.

By working together, we continue to make a lasting impact in the communities we serve.

*Serving Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston Counties*

## GTPDD hosts Mississippi Municipal League orientation for newly elected municipal officials

The Golden Triangle Planning and Development District hosted the Mississippi Municipal League's orientation for newly elected officials June 23.

Rudy Johnson, executive director of the GTPDD, welcomed the MML staff and new officials.

Speakers at the event included MML Executive Director Shari Veazey, Deputy Executive Director Robbie Brown, and contract lobbyist Trey Bobinger.

MML members introduced new officials to the organization's mission, services, leadership structure, as well as a 2025 legislative update.

The newly elected municipal officers are slated to take office in July.

### The 2024-2025 MML officers are:

- President: Billy Nowell, Mayor of Cleveland;
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Patti Pettit, Mayor of Woodland;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Hope Magee Jones, Mayor of Collins.

## 2025 ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**CHOCTAW:** 7/7, 11:30 A.M., BOS BOARDROOM CRTHOUSE

**CLAY:** 7/1, 9 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:** 7/7, 8:15 A.M., CRTHOUSE SUP. BOARDROOM

**WEBSTER:** 7/7, 10:15 A.M., BOS BOARDROOM CRTHOUSE

**WINSTON:** 7/7, 2 P.M., CRTHOUSE CRTROOM, 2ND FLOOR

## Staff

### Anniversaries: 5+ Years

#### June

Tina McWhorter	25
Minnie Lindsey	21
Lena Davis	19
Sharon Duke	19
Tina Gill	14
Sheila Winters	14
Dana Dawkins	11
Tennie Simpson	09
Willie Williams	08
Tiphonie Steele	05
Kimyada Agnew	05

#### May

Toby Sanford	21
Lesa Wilson	21
Queenzella Gibson	20
Teshia Taylor	18
Katy Henry	08
Glenn Spitler	08
Landen Upchurch	07
Valeria Jones	06

#### April

Rudy Johnson	35
Janet Macon	23
Keisha Warren	21
Gertrue Weatherspoon	11
Debra Hill	07
John Bauer	07

**We appreciate our hard-working staff  
so much!**



# WIOA GATEWAY PROGRAM: A SUCCESS STORY

*Nakiya*



Each year the Golden Triangle Planning & Development staff has the privilege of working with youth from seven different counties through the Gateway program. It is not uncommon for these youth to be outstanding individuals.

However the old adage, "There's one in every crowd", rings true among the participants in this program as well! The one in this crowd is Nakiya.

Nakiya, a senior at West Lowndes High School, joined the Gateway program during the spring semester of the 2024-2025 school year. Coming from a single parent home and being a single parent herself, one might think that Nakiya had all the odds against her. That could have been the case if she allowed it to be, but she didn't!

Nakiya was very eager to begin workforce training classes so that she could start working! She was so eager that she contacted us several times just to ask, "When can we get started?"

Nakiya's internship placement was at Bright Stars Learning II Center. Her supervisor there said that she was a true asset to the center and was a

"natural" in working with the children. She was also described by her supervisor as being punctual, dependable and hardworking.

She successfully balanced her academic obligations, parenting her son, her part-time job and her internship. She also graduated as an honor student from West Lowndes High School.

Upon completion of her internship, she was hired at Bright Stars Learning II Center. Her internship was a success!

Nakiya's future plans include joining the National Guard and one day owning her own business.

Because Nakiya has exhibited determination, motivation, exceptional work ethic and a positive attitude, the GTPDD staff is confident that her future will be one filled with success. Nakiya is a true success story.

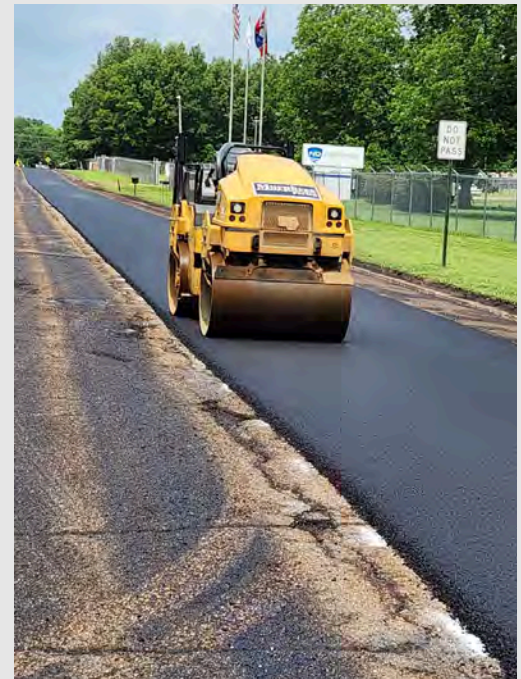
If you know a dependable young person who is interested in this program, contact Mitzi Lawrence at 662-324-5007.

## Repair project begins on East Mile Half Road in West Point

Construction has begun on the East Mile Half Road repair project in West Point.

The \$500,000 project is partially funded by \$300,000 in grant funds from the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The road services Navistar Defense, the Mississippi National



Guard Maintenance Facility and the Fifth Street Elementary School.



# Senior Enrichment Centers



Mahjong is the newest rage at the center. A few people are trying to learn how to play so they can teach others. It is challenging, but after it clicks with you, they say it will be your favorite game. Some are still waiting on that click.

Mahjong sets range from \$100-200 for a basic set, which four can play, but they go up in price as much as you are willing to spend.

Here is a beginner set that someone who has two sets is letting us use. The tiles look and feel sort of like dominoes, but the game is nothing like dominoes.



**Jane Harper**  
January 17, 1937 – June 11, 2025

Mary "Jane" Harper, 88, of Columbus, MS, died peacefully in her sleep at Baptist Memorial Hospital- GT on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 9:15 P.M.

Visitation will be Monday, June 16, 2025, from 1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M. at Lowndes Funeral Home in Columbus, MS. Funeral Service will be Monday, June 16, 2025, at 2:00 P.M. at Lowndes Funeral Home in Columbus, MS, with Bro. Tommy Gillon officiating. Interment will follow at Memorial Gardens in Columbus, MS with Lowndes Funeral Home directing.

The Columbus Senior Enrichment Center lost Jane Harper on June 11.

She was described as one of those quiet, sweet, charming, southern and, Christian ladies.

She was a big part of the senior activities in Columbus for many years. She is already so missed.

## North Mississippi Rural Legal Services offers free legal services to seniors

North Mississippi Rural Legal Services will be in Columbus in July for Will Day. It will be on one of the last four Thursdays in July.

If you are 60 years or older and need a will, power of attorney, advanced directives, or transfer upon death documents, please call 662-386-0001 to be placed on the list.

A designated day will be determined soon.

# Elderly and Disabled Waiver

The Medicaid 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.

All people eligible to receive the services under this waiver must first be approved through the Division of Medicaid.

## Qualifications:

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

662-320-2003

# Medicaid Waiver Services

- **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.
- **Medication Management:** This service is for participants with chronic health conditions who are prescribed a daily regimen of at least five prescription medications to receive consultations and follow up visits with a licensed pharmacist.
- **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 service is provided to participants who are unable to care for themselves; furnished on a short-term basis because of the absence or need for relief of those person’s normally providing the care.

## Medicaid Waiver RNs and LSWs:

<u>Oktibbeha</u>	<u>Lowndes</u>	<u>Noxubee</u>
#1: Tina McWhorter, RN Andrea Wright, LSW	#1: Angela Whitaker, RN Penny Harrison, RN	#1: Rachael Unruh, RN
#2: Jennifer Grantham, LSW Jennifer Bridges, LSW	#2: Cindy Reese, RN Tennie Simpson, LSW	Lauren Smith, LSW
#3: Paige Winfield, RN Christina Free, LSW	#3: Lindsey Livingston, RN Angelia Sansing, LSW	#2: Tammy Castle, RN
#4: Krystal Taylor, RN Megan Aucoin, LSW	<u>Clay:</u> Mitzi Phelps, RN Lesia Wilson, LSW	Kallie Hubbard, LSW
<u>Choctaw:</u> Tina Gill, RN Kaylee Tisdale, LSW	<u>Webster:</u> Sydney Thompson, RN Lisa Woods, LSW	<u>Winston:</u> Kim Mills, RN Annette Crabtree, RN

## CONTACTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA



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**Pharmacy: 662-320-2011**

**Aging: 662-320-2001**

**Solid Waste: 1-800-217-6909**



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**The GTPDD is online at [www.gtpdd.com](http://www.gtpdd.com).**



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**Planning and Development District, Inc.**