



# Golden Triangle Planning & Development District, Inc.



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## From the Director. . . . .



Rupert L. "Rudy" Johnson  
Executive Director

What is Easter? Without a doubt one of the most important celebrations in the Christian calendar, Easter is a holiday that celebrates the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. After His crucifixion, death and burial, three days later, He arose from the grave. By this, He conquered death and redeemed us from sin.

Take this time to celebrate our Lord and Savior with friends and family. Wishing you a safe and wonderful Easter weekend!



## *This Is What It's All About*

Youth in the WIOA In-School Program, a Gateway Workforce Service, report that they are experiencing for the first time in their lives:

- § Exhilaration of being hired for a first job
- § Anticipation of first work day
- § Nervousness and excitement upon entering the work place door for the first time
- § Learning coworkers' and supervisors' names
- § Acceptance and encouragement by coworkers
- § Holding the first paycheck in hand
- § Calculating and recalculating amount of first paycheck
- § Surprise and horror at the deductions in the first paycheck
- § Buying something with "my own money"

As of March 31, eighty (80) students from Choctaw, Clay, Lowndes, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, Webster and Winston counties were certified into the program. Fifty-two (52) of those completed essential job skills training and were offered a paid internship. Fifty (50) of these students accepted the opportunity and several were hired for part-time positions upon completion of the internship. Currently twenty-seven (27) students in Clay, Noxubee, Oktibbeha, and Webster counties are completing job skills training and all completers will be offered a paid internship in their local communities.

Through a partnering of businesses in the seven counties and the GTPDD, each student is allowed to work a maximum of 100 hours at \$8.50 per hour. Participating businesses gain the service of an employee whose salary and workers' comp are paid through the WIOA funds. In exchange, the youth is provided a real work experience with potential for unsubsidized employment.

GTPDD currently has funding for 10 additional participants. If you know of a person, business supervisor or student, who would like to participate in the Gateway In-School Program contact Mitzi Lawrence at 662-324-5007.

### **JANUARY**

Phylis Benson	29 years
Jennifer Bridges	11 years
Jessie Evans	24 years
Tricia Jones	29 years

### **FEBRUARY**

Lisa Coleman	13 years
George Crawford	44 years
Jenny Grantham	19 years
Sarah Harkins	12 years
Michelle Harris	20 years
Scott Stewart	15 years

### **MARCH**

Shelby Beam	09 years
Christina Bland	08 years
Bobby Gann	49 years
Ethel Goss	20 years
Carla Guyton	14 years

#### ***Staff Anniversaries***

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

## April is Fair Housing Month

*“The enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act on April 11, 1968 came only after a long and difficult journey.”*



On April 11, 1968, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which was meant 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 (of 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 fair housing bill, but 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 Lyndon 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 African-American 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 hard for the Senate to pass the Fair Housing Act and remedy this inequity. Senators Edward Brooke and Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts argued deeply for the passage of this legislation. In particular, Senator Brooke, the first African-

American ever to be elected to the Senate by popular vote, spoke personally of his return from World War II and inability to provide a home of his choice for his new family because of his race.

With the cities rioting after Dr. King's assassination, and destruction mounting in every part of the United States, 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 then Governor of Michigan, George Romney, 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 1st 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 one of the organizations that started it all -- the National Committee Against Discrimination In Housing.

In subsequent years, the tradition of celebrating Fair Housing Month grew larger and 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)

## ***Medicaid Waiver***

The Division of Medicaid is authorized by state legislation and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to administer the Elderly and Disabled waiver program.

The Medicaid Waiver Program provides home and community-based services that assist Medicaid beneficiaries to remain in their homes and avoid institutionalization. Eligibility is determined through a comprehensive assessment encompassing activities of daily living, sensory deficits, cognitive deficits, behaviors and medical conditions.

Thirteen teams currently serve the GTPDD. Each case management team consists of a registered nurse and a licensed social worker who visit the client on a monthly basis to provide, monitor and coordinate the services that are offered through this program. These services may include: Home Delivered Meals, Personal Care Services, In-Home Respite, and Adult Day Care.

Personal Care Services are non-medical support services to assist the client in meeting daily living needs and ensure optimal functioning at home and/or in the community. Services must be provided in accordance with the participant's plan of care. PCS includes assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, personal hygiene, and activities of daily living. Meal preparation may be provided; however, the cost of meals is not covered. Housekeeping chores may be provided if the care is essential to the health and welfare of the individual, rather than the individual's family. PCS may also involve hands-on assistance or cuing/prompting the participant to perform a task; accompanying and assisting the participant in accessing community resources and participating in community activities; supervision and monitoring in the participant's home, during transportation, and in the community setting. The PCS may accompany, when medically justified, participants during transport with transport provided by the Medicaid NET provider.

Michelle Harris is the RN Supervisor for the Medicaid Waiver Program. Current team members are:

### **Choctaw**

Tina Gill, RN  
Kaylee Hunt, LSW

### **Clay**

Mitzi Phelps, RN  
Lesia Wilson, LSW

### **Lowndes #1**

Leah Agnew, RN  
Jessica Rodgers, LSW

### **Lowndes #2**

Cindy Reese, RN  
Tennie Simpson, LSW

### **Lowndes #3**

Lindsey Livingston, RN  
Angelia Sansing, LSW

### **Noxubee #1**

Rachel Unruh, RN  
Jennifer Bridges, LSW

### **Noxubee #2**

Tammy Castle, RN  
Kallie Hubbard, LSW

### **Oktibbeha #1**

Tina McWhorter, RN  
Andrea Wright, LSW

### **Oktibbeha #2**

Stacy Elkins, RN  
Jennifer Grantham, LSW

### **Oktibbeha #3**

Christina Bland, LSW

### **Oktibbeha #4**

Krystal Taylor, RN  
Megan Aucoin, LSW

### **Webster**

Sydney Thompson, RN  
Lisa Woods, LSW

### **Winston**

Kim Mills, RN  
Lauren Smith, LSW

## FY2023 CDBG Applications Due May 15-19, 2023

Local units of government should plan immediately for the upcoming FY23 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application process. CDBG Public Facilities applications will be accepted by the Mississippi Development Authority from May 15 - 19, 2023.

The FY2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Final Statement outlining the application process for this year has been released by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). The minimum threshold requirements are that at least 51% of the project beneficiaries be of low and moderate income; and applicants must have no open Public Facility (Regular or Small Government) grants and no unresolved audit or monitoring findings. This year's allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is projected to be \$24,800,000.

It is important for governmental entities to remember that the Community Services Division of MDA must receive an audit-reporting package within nine (9) months following the end of the fiscal year. The Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133 require a single audit for state and local governments, which expend \$750,000 or more in federal awards for that year. Entities, which expend less than \$750,000 a year in federal awards, are exempt from federal audit requirements for that year, but an acceptable Funding Certification Form must be submitted to MDA. Failure to provide this information to the Mississippi Development Authority in a timely manner will **disqualify** an applicant from submitting a CDBG application during the fiscal year. Any governmental entity needing assistance with this matter should contact the PDD.

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### Noxapater Street Improvements Project Underway

The Town of Noxapater is utilizing monies appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature, local funds and a Mississippi Small Municipality Limited Population County Grant to reconstruct streets throughout this small municipality in rural Winston County. Many streets are in a severe state of disrepair with broken asphalt and numerous base failures creating unsafe conditions for the residents of this community.



These streets make crucial contributions to economic development and growth and bring important social benefits which are of vital importance in order for a small municipality to grow, develop and maintain existing commerce by providing access to employment, health and education services.