

GOLDEN TRIANGLE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, INC.

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Director's Message

The year of 2025 has already brought many new opportunities and chances to reflect on past years' progress.

This quarter marks my 35th anniversary with the GTPDD, and I am incredibly honored to have been able to serve our local communities for more than three decades.

Over the years, I am proud to have played a role in growing the Golden Triangle region through many different programs and services for our residents. I am incredibly thankful for the team alongside me who have shared the same commitment to bettering the lives of those around us.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our mission to grow and support the GTPDD and its counties.



*Executive
Director
Rupert L.
"Rudy"
Johnson*

The dedication for these local communities has truly made a change in so many lives through the years.

As we anticipate Easter, I hope everyone remembers the grace and hope Christ has given us in this life. Happy New Year as well!

Rudy Johnson

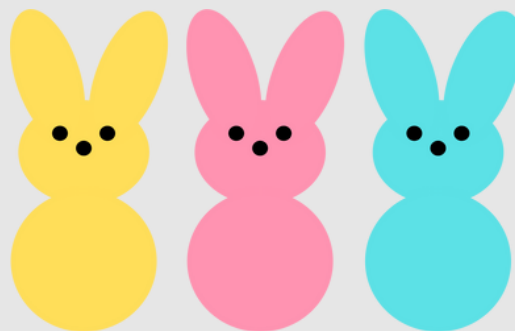
GTPDD Executive Director

FY2025 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT APPLICATIONS

Local units of government should plan immediately for the upcoming FY25 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application process. CDBG Public Facilities applications will be accepted by the Mississippi Development Authority from May 12-16, 2025.

The FY2025 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 \$24,335,000.

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 GTPDD.



FAIR HOUSING MONTH

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 (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.



FAIR HOUSING MONTH

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)



WIOA GATEWAY PROGRAM: SUCCESS STORY

Tylan, a junior at Starkville High School, applied and was accepted for participation in the WIOA Gateway In-School Program. After completing six hours of essential job skills training, he chose to complete his internship at The Welding Works in Starkville.

He said that he has always wanted to follow in his grandfather's footsteps and become a certified welder. He had already taken the first steps on his Career Pathway by taking welding classes at Millsaps Career & Technology Center.

He felt this internship opportunity would benefit his future career goals. The owner of The Welding Works was immediately impressed with Tylan. He told him he needed to purchase a welding hood since it was evident he could do the work. Tylan's supervisor recommended a specific welding hood and suggested a company from which to purchase it.



Mitzi Lawrence, Gateway Director, contacted the company and spoke with Andrea in customer service. Lawrence shared information concerning the Gateway Program and Tylan's internship and asked if they gave educational discounts to help with the purchase of welding hoods for students in training.

Andrea shared that their company manager likes to work with communities to help young people achieve their goals. She asked for more information about the program and handwritten essay from Tylan on why he wanted to become a welder.

Tylan completed his essay and all requested information was emailed. He received his welding hood soon after sending in his essay. He was thrilled when the welding hood came in and wrote a letter of thanks to the company.

During his internship, Tylan worked mornings before school and in the afternoons. His immediate supervisor and managers at The Welding Works had many good words to say about Tylan's work ethic and how well he fit in with the team.

He was offered a part-time with the company and will continue to work during school. His hours will be increased in the summer.

Tylan was thankful for the opportunity given him through the Gateway program. We are proud of Tylan and all he accomplished during his internship. We look forward to seeing what he will accomplish in the future.

Tylan is one of many success stories, and you can be the next one on that list. For more information about the WIOA Gateway In-School Workforce Training Program, call Mitzi Lawrence at 662-324-5007.

GTPPD SENIOR ENRICHMENT CENTER



Sarah Marka Holley Crowley

Sarah Marka Holley Crowley of Columbus passed away Feb. 15, 2025, following a massive stroke. She was seven months shy of being 90 years old. Sarah was, as written in the obituary, a strong woman. She was sweet when it mattered but never afraid to show a little spice. Her adventurous spirit took her to all 50 states with the 50th being a trip to Hawaii in November 2024.

She was an accomplished seamstress, a wonderful cook, an avid gardener, a card and checker player, and a wonderful thrifter.

She also was an award-winning professional jewelry maker. Sarah led the Jewelry Class at the Senior Enrichment Center for 15 years, and she rarely missed a class. She taught the class how to do just about anything involved in designing and making an item of jewelry to educating the class about gemstones, techniques, findings and care of jewelry.

Most of all, she taught us about life through her stories, and boy, did she have some stories. One of the most important things to be said of Sarah was she loved her family and friends with compassion, devotion and generosity. She is so missed!

By Carla Guyton, Senior Enrichment Center Director

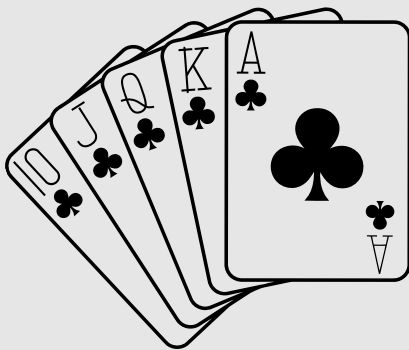
GTPPD SENIOR ENRICHMENT CENTER



Hand and Foot Card Group

HAND AND FOOT CARD GROUP

These ladies know how to have fun. In the last several months, we have gained seven new players. If everyone on the list were here on card day, it would fill nine tables. Usually there are five tables. That is 300 decks of jumbo index cards, five decks per round, four rounds per game, three games and five tables. That's a lot of cards!



The Columbus line dance class is now being held on Thursdays from 2-3 p.m. Sue Anderson has stepped up to teach the class and is doing an outstanding job!

We are in the process of getting dominoes started again. Several members are re-learning Chicken Foot and Mexican Train to come up with a version to play at the center. There are so many different ways to play!



HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED ELDERLY AND DISABLED WAIVER PROGRAM

What is it?

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. Eligibility is determined through a comprehensive screening instrument encompassing activities of daily living, sensory and cognitive deficits, and behavioral and medical conditions.

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 visit clients on a monthly basis and are responsible for managing and coordinating the services for each participant.
- **Personal Care Services (PCS):** These are supportive services to assist in daily living needs and ensure optimal functioning at home. They include assistance with eating, bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and activities of daily living. Meal preparation may be provided, but the cost of meals is not covered. Housekeeping may be provided if essential to the health and welfare of the individual.
- **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
Jennifer Bridges, LSW
#3: Paige Winfield, RN
Christina Bland, LSW
#4: Krystal Taylor, RN
Megan Aucoin, LSW

Lowndes

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

Noxubee

#1: Rachael Unruh, RN
Lauren Smith, LSW
#2: Tammy Castle, RN
Kallie Hubbard, LSW

Webster:

Sydney Thompson, RN
Lisa Woods, LSW

Choctaw:

Tina Gill, RN
Kaylee Tisdale, LSW

Clay:

Mitzi Phelps, RN
Lesa Wilson, LSW

Winston:

Kim Mills, RN

Staff Anniversaries: 5+ Years

January

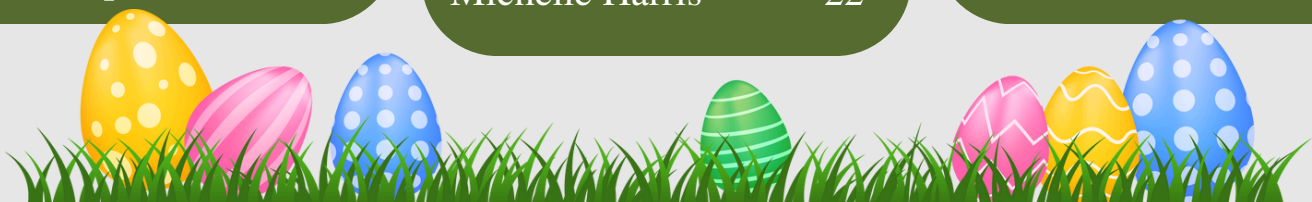
Megan Aucoin	06
Phylis Benson	31
Jennifer Bridges	13
Jessie Evans	26
Tricia Jones	31
Jamie Lang	12
Sam Sample	21

February

Shelby Beam	11
Lisa Coleman	15
George Crawford	47
Carolyn Ebenthal	08
Ishekee Edwards	09
Christina Free	10
Jenny Grantham	21
Sarah Harkins	14
Michelle Harris	22

March

Shelby Beam	11
Christina Bland	10
Bobby Gann	51
Ethel Goss	22
Carla Guyton	16
Kelsey McMinn	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**



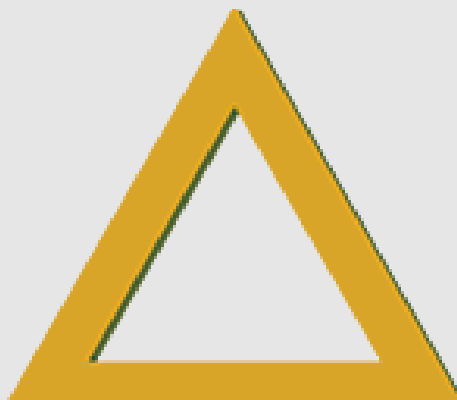
@GTrianglePDD



Main Office: 662-324-7328

Pharmacy: 662-320-2004

The GTPDD is online at www.gtpdd.com.



GOLDEN TRIANGLE

Planning and Development District, Inc.