

# The Insider

July 2022



## UNIVERSAL MH/DD/SAS Mission Statement

Universal MH/DD/SAS is dedicated to helping individuals and families affected by mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance abuse in achieving their full potential to live, work and grow in the community.

**WHY THE NEED FOR THE INSIDER ?** *The purpose of this newsletter is to provide specialized information to all Universal MH/DD/SAS employees. The intent is to develop an informed workforce, to foster a greater sense of community and to build morale.*

## One of Universal's Successful Programs

- submitted by EI Program Director, Amber Anderson

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*"We have thoroughly enjoyed the Early Intervention program and we are especially thankful for Ms. Chelsea. My twins Liam and Mila have come such a long way with their developmental milestones.*

*Josh and I certainly would recommend this program to anyone in need. Thank you for the opportunity to work with such a sweet and patient therapist."*

~ Josh and Leslie Starnes





*"My children, Arietta and Addilynn, have been in play therapy for about a year now. It has been so beneficial for them in a multitude of ways. They are learning sign language, sharing and playing nicely with others, how to regulate their emotions, and are progressing in pretend play.*

*Not only are they learning these things, but they are also developing better motor skills in enjoyable ways without even noticing it. I am super grateful for everything that play therapy is teaching my kids."*

*-Andee*

*"My son Trey has extremely benefited from Early Intervention Services. When we first began services, he wasn't as far along in development as he is now. We taught him to play by himself and how to self soothe. We recently started speech therapy as well, and he is doing very well with that. He isn't talking yet, but we'll get there. We are also waiting on occupational therapy to start, and the big thing there is to get him to respond to his name. We will get there too.*

*He still has a long way to go, but I know with the help and support from Universal's Early Intervention therapist he will continue to improve. I have my full confidence in Universal's Early Intervention and their wonderful therapists that we will continue to make strides in my son's development."*

*~ Mariena Lail*



*"My son's doctor suggested a program called the Community Based Rehabilitative Services (CBRS.) CBRS is more commonly known as "play therapy."*

*My baby Matix, is vocalizing now. He's making efforts to speak or signs to show me what he wants. He lets me play with him now and he mimics me or others around him while he plays. He watches now, his focus has improved greatly, and he is trying to figure out how his toys work. His eating habits have completely turned around. Instead of throwing his food all over the floor, he now can use a spoon or fork and I can see that he is less frustrated. I, myself, have learned so much from watching the interactions between Matix and his therapists. I now know that one or two words at a time helps him understand what I want him to do or say.*

*I learned that just playing beside Matix can benefit him. He is much more sociable, letting other kids play beside him. Even going up to adults he avoided before, his grandmother can hold him and hug him now, where he would have cried and struggled with being held at all. I also think it has helped my three-year-old because having two children so close in age I sometimes feel stretched, and I love that the therapists focus on Matix but they don't leave Carter out.*

*Thanks to Universal's EI therapists, I understand my child better and that has allowed me to tap into his way of thinking. They have helped my son play and communicate better. We would have been truly lost without them.*

***Universal's EI program has my highest regard, and I would recommend them to anyone who thinks their baby is on the Spectrum."***



Universal Mental Health has many programs, one of which is the Psychosocial Rehabilitation program located in Asheville, NC. PSR is lovingly known to its members as PSR or “school.” It is a place where magic happens daily. People come together here in the spirit of growth and recovery, receiving the support and compassion they need from staff and one another.

PSR is a haven for our members. A place where they can be themselves and feel comfortable knowing they are not only supported emotionally but also pushed forward in a positive way. The magic mentioned earlier, comes in the form of interpersonal connections, personal growth and development of skills that improve the quality of our member’s lives. We celebrate all steps: improvement on an academic skill, increased ability to independently use a computer, or new coping skills.

When COVID-19 hit, it was a very difficult time for our PSR members. What is a social program to do during a time of social prohibition? Temporary closure was unfortunately the only answer. Staff continued to stay connected with members as well as they could through video and phones, but it became harder and harder. As the days went on to convince members we would be open, that they could go back to “school” and see their friends again. Eventually that day did come, but not without numerous stipulations.

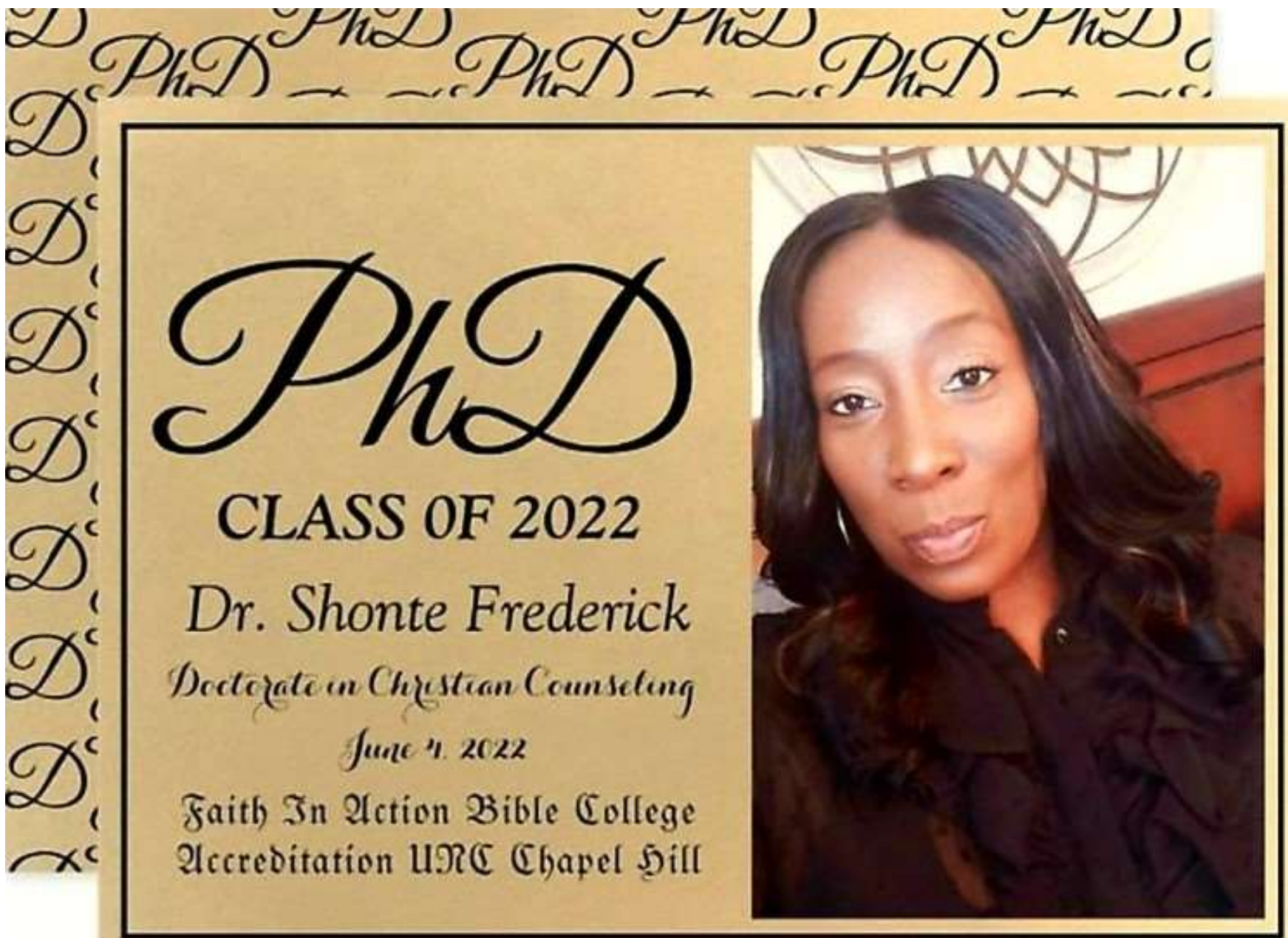
Universal’s PSR program was the first program of its kind to reopen in Buncombe County and surrounding areas. It was able to do so because of the dedication of its staff and the cooperation of its members. Staff tirelessly disinfected tables after every class and deep cleaned the facility every day. At first, members were served in quarantined groups based on the group homes in which they lived, to prevent potential spread of the virus. Adversity hit and PSR adapted, assuring that it’s members could continue to make progress in their lives and come together in the community they have created together here at Universal.

PSR continues to operate today without a single case of transmission happening through our program. PSR is proud of the role we play in our member’s lives. We hope to continue functioning as a haven for people in search of a positive and supportive community.



Meet Wilson's CST, Shonte Frederick. Shonte has been with Universal since 2014. Her QP, Monique Simmons says, "The pride Shonte takes in her work is so inspiring. Thank you for all the hard work you put in daily... know that it is recognized and greatly appreciated."

Congrats from Universal Shonte! We are proud of you!



It is with a heavy heart that we share that Robert Greer, one of Universal's founders, passed away on April 20. Robert, along with his late father Richard and sister Alicia, founded Universal in 2003. They, and our Leadership Team lead Universal to be the respected agency that we are today. With Alicia Brown as President, myself as CEO, Jennifer Carroll as CFO, and the rest of our Leadership Team, we intend to move forward with the vision that Robert had for the agency. He believed in providing the best services possible to the people who needed them while being thankful for the dedication of all our staff.

We appreciate all our employees and will continue to provide quality services, remain in good standing with all the MCO's and will continue to make a difference in the community.

Brook Phillips

CEO

Universal Mental Health Services, Inc



Marilyn Porter was an unforgettable Regional Director for the Eastern Region of Universal Mental Health Services. For her family and those who knew her, she was a dynamic personality with endless dedication to the people that she served. When you worked with Marilyn, you became family.

Marilyn came to Universal in September of 2011 and throughout her time at Universal, impacted countless employees and individuals that Universal supports. Her advocacy and spirit embodied the mission of “Caring People, Caring for People.” Marilyn passed away on March 27, 2020, after a courageous fight with cancer. Her loss was one that was felt statewide. Marilyn Porter’s legacy will live on through this scholarship.

The Universal Marilyn Porter Scholarship will be awarded annually in the amount of \$1000. It will be awarded to an hourly direct care staff through an application process. The applicant must commit to attend an accredited college (community college, university, etc.) within the year of the scholarship award.

The scholarship will be selected by a 6-person committee made up of Universal employees. The decision will be made based primarily on a short essay from the applicant. The scholarship decision will not be based on, race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender as well as sexual orientation, religious preference, age, disability, or political affiliation.

If you are a direct care hourly staff at Universal, you can apply for the Universal Marilyn Porter Scholarship from July 1st through July 15th. A Scholarship committee will then announce the recipient on August 1, 2022.

You can apply for the scholarship at: <https://umhs.net/scholarship>





Kathryn Grandgenett and Tracey Holton have a Word document titled “Signs from God.” In it, the pair list things that happen that tell Grandgenett and Holton they are on the right path. Grandgenett and Holton are opening a franchise location of We Rock the Spectrum in Hickory. The gym has equipment that caters to children with autism, development disorders and other sensory processing disorders.

There are locations nationwide, including Asheville and Winston-Salem. Grandgenett and Holton are well-versed in autism and related disorders. Grandgenett’s son Liam has autism and she worked with exceptional children in schools for years. Holton is a teacher specializing in children with autism and related conditions. The pair met through a nonprofit that helps autistic children in public schools. Both are advocates for children and adults with autism, which is why they plan to open We Rock the Spectrum to bring a safe space for children with autism in their area.

The gym will offer safe equipment like a zip line, trampoline, hammock swing, rock climbing wall, a rope bridge and more. There, parents can trust their children are safe while they play, Grandgenett said. She knows herself the difficulty of having peace of mind that your child with autism is safe, she said. “My son is on the spectrum. They have so much energy, but you can’t just say, ‘Go off and play.’ You want to watch them,” she said.



There will also be care offered at the gym where parents can drop kids off for church or date nights and trust they are cared for, Holton said. The staff of We Rock the Spectrum will be trained by Holton, who is an autism specialist and board-certified behavior analyst, to care for children on the spectrum.

In conjunction with the gym franchise, Grandgenett and Holton are starting the LIFE Center — Living Independently For Everyone. Through the LIFE Center business, they plan to teach young adults and teenagers with and without disabilities life skills like cooking, cleaning, budgeting and more. The idea came from Grandgenett's own worry for her 11-year-old son's future, and Holton's work transitioning students with autism into life beyond public school.

"I always wonder what he (Liam) is going to have to do, what am I going to have to help him with so he's independent?" Grandgenett said. Eventually, Grandgenett and Holton plan to offer job training for young adults and children on the spectrum.

The gym and LIFE Center will be in a 5,000-square-foot building on Seventh Street Court Southeast in Hickory. There is room for a large play area, a room for birthday parties, a room for a kitchen, where life skill classes will be held, and smaller rooms where Holton and Grandgenett hope kids might be tutored or go to therapy. The pair hopes to partner with independent therapists so they can offer speech or behavioral therapy in the gym, Holton said.

We Rock The Spectrum is planned to open in late summer, but construction delays could slow the process. In the meantime, Grandgenett and Holton are looking for local donors to help support the gym's opening and classes they plan to offer.

The local gym will work with the My Brother Rocks the Spectrum Foundation, a nonprofit that helps support the We Rock the Spectrum gyms and the children the gyms serve.



**Documentation consistency is very important! How do you qualify for this? By entering your notes within 24 hours of the completion of the service – consistently!**

**"THANK YOU" to these awesome individuals!**

Office	Staff	Notes Written in Qtr
Asheville	Thomas Myers Sr	39
Asheville	Denisia Harper	182
Forest City	Rhonda Evans	64
New Bern	Shelly Duclos	115
New Bern	Alonzo Reels	50
New Bern	Michael Ross	90
Raleigh	Lynne Girton	38
Raleigh	Mickie Soules	65
Wilson	Mary Cooper	64
Winston	Phillip Searcy	64



We are excited to announce that over the coming months, we'll be working on moving more of our content/services to cloud-based services. We have procured Azure Active Directory (AAD) to manage identities and devices at Universal Mental Health Services. This is a change from our current management technique, which is server-based at our Lenoir, NC office. With this change, UMHS will have moved most of our workloads to Cloud-Based services.

What does this actually mean?

1. Having cloud-based services makes UMHS more resilient, more efficient, and increases our security posture.
2. Azure Active Directory (AAD) allows us to more easily manage all our devices, including the ability to remotely wipe data in case a device is lost or stolen.
1. AAD improves our standardization of devices and allows us to easily onboard new devices with auto-installing of all required software.
4. Our security posture will improve with inspection of encrypted data that travels across our network and virtual private network (VPN) client installation on all devices to monitor all traffic for security threats.
5. Ease of management of people and devices for our Information Technology (IT) Depart.



Azure Active Directory

We need your help!

Over the coming weeks, someone from either our IT Department, or someone from Electronic Office (EO) will be reaching out to every user with a company-owned device to get those devices onboarded into our management tool inside AAD. Please be prepared to schedule time with someone working on this initiative to make this happen. You'll hear from us soon!

If you have any questions or would like more information about this or any IT issue, feel free to contact the IT Department. The easiest, most-effective way to reach IT is by emailing [trackit@umhs.net](mailto:trackit@umhs.net).



# First Aid for Heat Illness

**The following are signs of a medical emergency!**



- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness

**1** >> **CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY**

**2** >> **COOL THE WORKER RIGHT AWAY WITH WATER OR ICE**

**3** >> **STAY WITH THE WORKER UNTIL HELP ARRIVES**



**Watch for any other signs of heat illness and act quickly. When in doubt, call 911.**

**If a worker experiences:**

- Headache or nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output



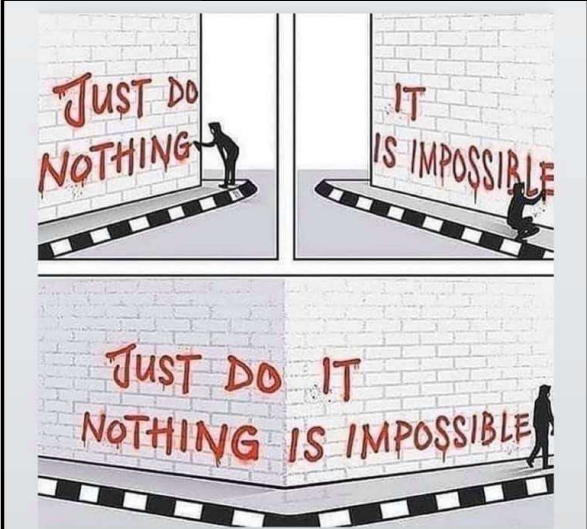
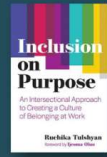
**Take these actions:**

- >> Give water to drink
- >> Remove unnecessary clothing
- >> Move to a cooler area
- >> Cool with water, ice, or a fan
- >> Do not leave alone
- >> Seek medical care if needed

### BRIDGE: An approach to cultivating an inclusion mindset

- 1. Be uncomfortable
- 2. Reflect (on what you don't know)
- 3. Invite feedback
- 4. Defensiveness doesn't help
- 5. Grow from your mistakes
- 6. Expect that change takes time

*Inclusion on Purpose*  
 by Ruchika Tulshyan  
*dare to lead*  
 with BRENE BROWN



@ssg\_harper19d

**U gotta look at life from more than just 1 angle**



1. Check in with your child and be available.
2. Give kids reassuring facts about their safety
3. Treat children according to their age
4. Limit exposure to media
5. Model healthy behavior
6. Have a plan
7. Observe children's emotional state and seek help if necessary.



## More Tips

The National Association of School Psychologists has guidelines for explaining violent events to children of different ages. It's important, the experts say, to use age-appropriate language, and to answer questions without adding to confusion. From the NASP tip sheet:

**Early elementary school children** need brief, simple information that should be balanced with reassurances that their school and homes are safe and that adults are there to protect them.

**Upper elementary and early middle school students** will be more vocal in asking questions about whether they truly are safe and what is being done at their school. They may need help separating reality from fantasy. Discuss efforts of school and community leaders to provide safe schools.

**Upper middle school and high school students** will have strong and varying opinions about the causes of violence in schools and society. Emphasize the role that students have in maintaining safe schools by following school safety guidelines, communicating any personal safety concerns to school administrators and accessing support for emotional needs.

# Universal's Cultural Sensitivity Mission Statement

"Universal MH/DD/SAS strives to develop awareness and respect in order to celebrate the diverse backgrounds of people."

July



7/7 – The Hajj (Islamic): annual pilgrimage to Mecca, that all able-bodied Muslims must take at least once in their lives.

Aug



8/9 – International Day of the World's Indigenous People (United Nations): created by the UN, celebrates the cultures of indigenous peoples around the world

Sept



9/15-10/15 – National Hispanic Heritage Month: This month honors the culture and contributions of both Hispanic and Latino Americans





## Check out the Company Store!



# KUDOS

Leslie Cothren says  
*"Kudos to Tray Smith for  
 always thinking outside  
 the box to solve IT  
 problems."*

*Kudos to Brook Phillips  
 for being an exceptional  
 leader."*

Zsa Zsa Johnson says *"Kudos to Brittney Thomas for  
 keeping up and doing the transcription for the  
 doctors. She has been doing a great job!"*

Courtney Cox says *"Kudos for Hamilton and Josie  
 for staying on top of their notes and EVV.  
 Kudos for Christina and Britany for being the  
 most AMAZING supervisors!"*

The 1- and 5-year longevity coupons are mailed monthly!!

<https://umhs.net/company-store>



Anthony Yingling says, *"Kudos to Chelsea Calnan for being a super support to the AFL providers and direct care staff she supervises and to Shannon Gonzalez for the excellent work she does managing Arbor House group home!"*

Loretta Welcher says *"Kudos to Audrey Cobb for her support and willingness to share knowledge regarding the scanning project!"*

Patra Lowe says, *"Kudos to Carla Gray for always being willing to step in and help staff and individuals served, Terry for brainstorming new staff employment options, and to Sheila in the Forest City office for finding staff."*

Courtney Cox says, *"Kudos to Terry to this list for always brightening everyone's day when he comes to do training...and to Drema for putting all this together for everyone!"*

Sarah Gupta says *"an ENORMOUS thank you to Audrey Cobb for all her support to those of us in the Raleigh office. She has been amazing at getting our annual consents moved to a DocuSign process and helps to keep QPs on top of our paperwork. We could not do all that we are able to do without her."*

Loretta Welcher says, *"Kudos to Lori in Forest City for always going out of her way to assist me and making the office look great and to Ingrid for being a great boss. She ensures that I get the right training to succeed at my job!"*



Colton Sankey says, *“Kudos to Susan McKinney, Peer Support Specialist who is flexible and has agreed to be embedded in the PSR program. She is a real team player during a difficult time for staffing at Universal.”*

Christie Alston says, *“Kudos to Saacha Satterfield for always turning in her consents/plans ontime!!!”*

Heather Everhart says, *“Kudos to Ms. Audrey for her continued efforts with DocuSign pilot!*

*Kudos to all the direct care staff out there getting things done! You deserve the BIGGEST kudos of all!”*

*Zsa Zsa Johnson says, “Kudos to Ms. Audrey for learning DocuSign and keeping annual consents up to date for the Raleigh Office.”*

Brently Carr says, *“Kudos to the accounting staff for their great teamwork. Many times, I have called on them especially Heather and never did I feel unsatisfied with the help rendered. To me they are all so full of joy. When I am stressed and call on them, they have lifted my spirits.”*



Three of Universal's finest: Regional Director **Christina Clatterbuck**, QP-IDD Brandy Reagan and Regional Office Manager **Brittany Clemens**. These folks exemplify success in action!

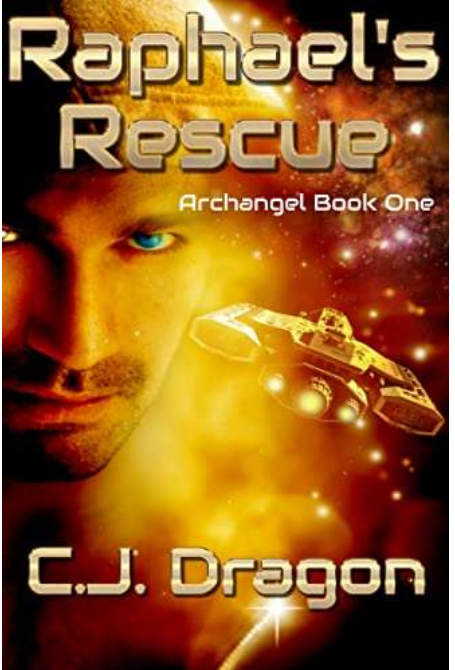


Major congrats are for Universal President Alicia Greer Brown's son Grayam. He and his beautiful bride to be will be wed on September 24<sup>th</sup> at the Blowing Rock Country Club in Blowing Rock, NC.

Executive Administrator Beverly Smith is a proud Maw-Maw. Pictured here is Piper with her new sister Evvie James Smith, born June 4<sup>th</sup>.



Loretta Welcher became a great grandmother on her birthday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. Granddaughter Alivia gave birth to identical twin girls, Alora and Aaliyah. Aren't they beautiful?



Licensed MH Clinician, Cynthia Bradley published her first book. This is the cover that you can find on Amazon.

