



The Insider

Oct 2023

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.*



SUCCESS - submitted by QP, Taylor Smith

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QP, Taylor Smith is so proud of both Paige and David. She says, *“David has been receiving services through Universal for many years. He has a good sense of humor and enjoys socializing with others. David loves to go out in the community with his staff, Paige Wagner. Paige is very patient with David, ensures that he stays safe in the community, and makes sure he explores various meaningful activities.*



There are a couple of the things that David enjoys. One is walking. He walks at the park, Tractor Supply and Ace Hardware. Another is he participates in volunteer opportunities and while doing this he follows the rules. Weekly David and Paige go to the Mars Hill Center, where he interacts with non-disabled peers. While there they deliver meals to the seniors. The seniors anticipate seeing David and are truly thankful for him.

QP, Taylor Smith says, David and Paige are truly making a difference in their community. I appreciate Paige for being a consistent staff and helping David reach his goals!”





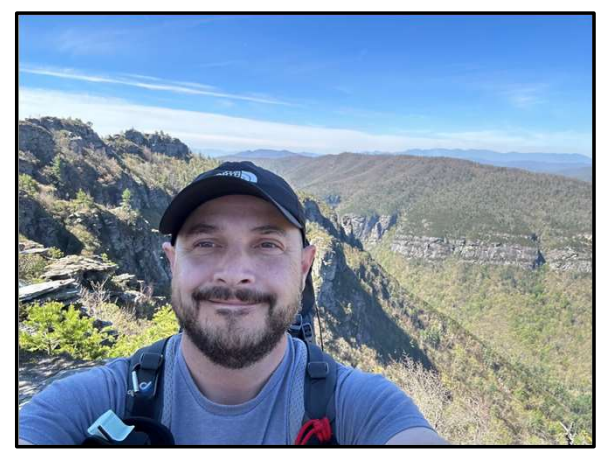
The proud winner of this year's Marilyn Porter Scholarship is Anneice Morman from the New Bern office. Anneice says, *"I decided to work in the healthcare field because I love to help people and make them feel good about themselves. I am currently attending Pamlico Community College to obtain CNA II and a Medication Aide license. My goal is to ultimately become a Registered Nurse and obtain a BSN at ECU. I am a single mother of 2 daughters ages 1 and 12. I wholeheartedly agree with Universal's motto, "Caring people, caring for people." This is what Ms. Marilyn stood for and I think it says it all. This is what I strive to achieve"*.

"I have always had a heart for service and serving on this board has been an enlightening time. It never surprises me the incidents that occur on a day-to-day basis in a home we serve. I hope that I can continue to be of service." – Kevin Farris



"I serve on the Human Rights Committee to be a voice for those with intellectual disabilities or mental illness and their families that may have difficulty advocating for themselves and ensure that their rights are respected." – Erik Bentley

I am an ordained Methodist minister that currently serves as Executive Director of Repay, Inc. I am interested in issues of social justice especially pertaining to criminal justice and poverty. I believe that all people should give back to the community and help others. That is why I serve on the Human Rights Committee of Universal Mental Health. – Renee Lewis



I am proud to be a community representative for Universal Mental Health Services. They provide compassionate and detailed care for the people they serve. As a grandmother of a child who has autism, I truly understand the importance of the services provided by Universal. I certainly appreciate all services this group offers and their commitment toward the best for all individuals. This dedication and commitment makes me proud to be associated with Universal. – Ramona Barus

"The Human Rights Committee for Universal MH/DD/SAS is comprised of volunteers from the communities we serve. This committee reviews incident reports, investigations and behavior plans that come thru our agency. They ensure that the rights of our members are respected and that we are providing the best services possible for our members. This committee includes mental health professionals, I/DD professionals, a family member and a concerned member of the community. We are very fortunate to have these folks volunteer their time and talents for our members. We are fortunate that most of these folks have been with us for several years. I'm sending a HUGE "THANK YOU" to these amazing people!" – Tracy Frye

Universal's Office Administrator, Bruce Kemp Claytor (70), passed away on July 24, 2023, at his home in Waynesville, NC surrounded by his family.



Bruce was born on September 16, 1952, in Chattanooga, TN. Bruce was the oldest of four siblings and he was always firmly devoted to his family. His relationship with his mother was very personal to him, and one that most would wish for. He always used his role as the oldest of four to help guide his younger siblings in life, always being there to help them in time of need. He took that role even further helping to mentor and guide his niece, nephew, and step-grandson.

Bruce married the love of his life, Universal's Clinical Director, Patra Lowe in 2006. It was one of the most iconic weddings their families had ever seen. Bruce entered a new family, and brought his same sense of devotion, love, caring, and kindness with him. He was there to help anyone in any way, always for his family.

Bruce was employed in our Asheville office since 2007. Long-time co-worker, Ingrid Freeman says *"Bruce was quiet, but full of life once you got to know him. He was detailed and always up for doing the job to the best of his ability. He is missed!"*

Patra, your Universal family is saddened by Bruce's passing. We trust you have felt our love!



CARF stands for 'Commission of Accreditation for Rehabilitation Facilities'. Universal MH/DD/SAS is required (as are all MH Providers) to be accredited by a recognized accrediting body. CARF surveyors are made up of professionals from agencies related to the services we provide. These surveyors work on a volunteer basis and have been through accreditation for the agencies they work for. This group will review our programs, our staff, our offices, our policies and procedures and the members we serve. This will be the 5th survey that Universal has been through. Each survey, we have earned the highest accreditation CARF offers (which is a three-year accreditation). We are expecting no less this year and will strive to ensure this achievement. CARF ensures that we continue to provide the best services possible for our members. - Tracy Frye, CQI Director

Phishing attacks aim to steal or damage sensitive data by deceiving people into revealing personal information like passwords and credit card numbers. Be wary of any message (by phone, email, or text) that asks for sensitive data or asks you to prove your identity. Attackers work hard to imitate familiar entities and will use the same logos, designs, and interfaces as brands or individuals you are already familiar with. Stay vigilant and don't click a link or open an attachment unless you are certain the message is legitimate.



Here are some tips for recognizing a phishing email:

Don't trust display names: Check the sender's email address before opening a message—the display name might be a fake.

Check for typos: Spelling mistakes and poor grammar are typical in phishing emails. If something looks off, report it.

Look before clicking: Hover over hyperlinks in genuine-sounding content to inspect the link address.

Read the salutation: If the email is addressed to "Valued Customer" instead of to you, be wary. It's likely fraudulent.

Review the signature: Check for contact information in the email footer. Legitimate senders should always include them.

Beware of threats: Fear-based phrases like "Your account has been suspended" or urgent threats or calls to action (for example: "Open immediately") are prevalent in phishing emails.

As always, please report any suspicious emails you receive to the IT Department by emailing trackit@umhs.net



Now that the school bells are ringing, and students are returning to their classrooms. The American Red Cross offers ten ways to help make sure students are safe as they head back to school for the year.

1. If your student rides a bus to school, they should plan to get to their bus stop early and stand away from the curb while waiting for the bus to arrive.
2. Students should board the bus only after it has come to a complete stop and the driver or attendant has instructed them to get on. They should only board their bus, never an alternate one.
3. All students should stay in clear view of the bus driver and never walk behind the bus.
4. Cross the street at the corner, obey traffic signals and stay in the crosswalk.
5. Never dart out into the street or cross between parked cars.
6. If children go to school in a car, they should always wear a seat belt. Younger children should use car seats or booster seats until the lap-shoulder belt fits properly (typically for children ages 8-12 and over 4'9"), and ride in the back seat until they are at least 13 years old.
7. If a teenager is going to drive to school, parents should mandate that they use seat belts. Drivers should not use their cell phone to text or make calls and avoid eating or drinking while driving.
8. Some students ride their bike to school. They should always wear a helmet and ride on the right, in the same direction as the traffic is going.
9. When children are walking to school, they should only cross the street at an intersection, and use a route along which the school has placed crossing guards.
10. Parents should walk young children to school, along with children taking new routes or attending new schools, at least for the first week to ensure they know how to get there safely. Arrange for students to walk to school with a friend or classmate.

Parents of younger kids, especially those going to school for the first time, should make sure the child knows their phone number, address, how to contact their parents at work, how to contact another trusted adult and how to dial 911. Teach them not to talk to strangers or accept rides from someone they don't know.



Helping Your Child Resist Bullying

If your child is being bullied and expresses concern about bullying in their school, you can help them learn behaviors to protect themselves and their classmates.

What to say:

- Tell your child it is not their fault, and you will listen and help however you can.

What to teach:

- Practice saying, “Stop it,” in a calm, firm voice.
- Use a mirror to practice standing tall and looking unbothered.
- Ignore the bully by walking away or pretending to text.

What to do:

- Support activities that interest your child.
- Provide opportunities for your child to socialize with other children.
- Discuss with your child what will make them feel safe.
- Involve your child in the decision to alert school officials.
- Keep a log of any bullying events that occur.



NAMI HelpLine Call: 1-800-950-NAMI (6264) | Text: “helpline” to 62640 | Chat: nami.org/help



Need ideas of things to do to enhance the everyday goals?

Look no further. In this list you will find 40 Free iPad Apps for students with special needs. Below is a snippet of what they have to offer...FREE! Check it out below:

<https://elearningindustry.com/free-special-needs-ipad-apps-part-1>

Autism

1. [ABA Flash Cards & Games](#)
2. [Autism Emotion](#)
3. [Autism iHelp](#)
4. AutismXpress
5. Emotionary by Me.Mu
6. FindMe(Autism)
7. NLConcepts Autism
8. Odd Face Out
9. Sunny Day, A
10. Talking Picture Board
11. [Touch and Learn](#)
12. [What's the Expression for iOS](#)



As COVID-19 metrics continue to rise, state health officials want to remind you that treatment is readily available if you test positive. Treatment is appropriate for the majority of North Carolinians who are considered at high risk for severe illness based on age or underlying medical conditions.

Using antiviral treatments reduces the risk of serious illness and preliminary data indicates treatment is associated with a reduced risk of developing long-COVID, although treatment must be started early, even if symptoms are mild. All currently authorized and approved treatments are expected to retain effectiveness against the COVID-19 variants currently circulating, including the BA.2.86 variant that has recently been identified.

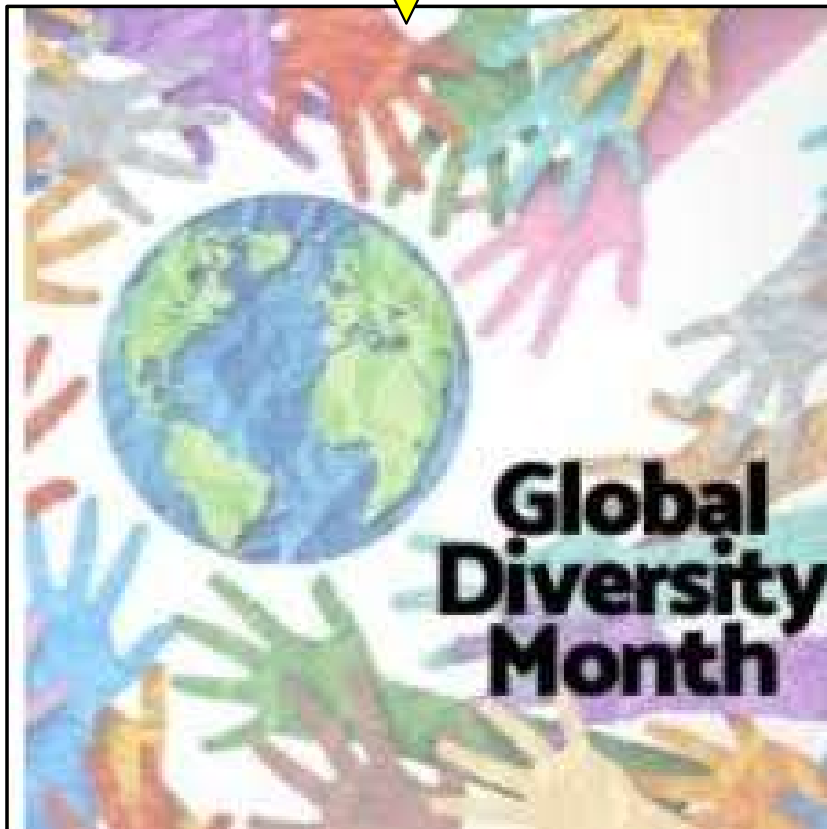
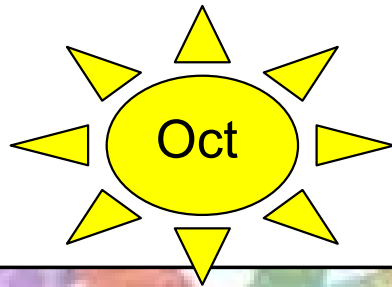


Talk with your health care provider to determine the best treatment option for you. Visit the Testing and Treatment website for information on how to get COVID-19 tests and more information on accessing treatment, including test-to-treat sites. Staying up-to-date with vaccines and timely access to treatment are the best ways to reduce hospitalization and death due to the illness. The most up-to-date booster aligned with circulating variants is expected to be available this fall.



Universal's Cultural Sensitivity Mission Statement

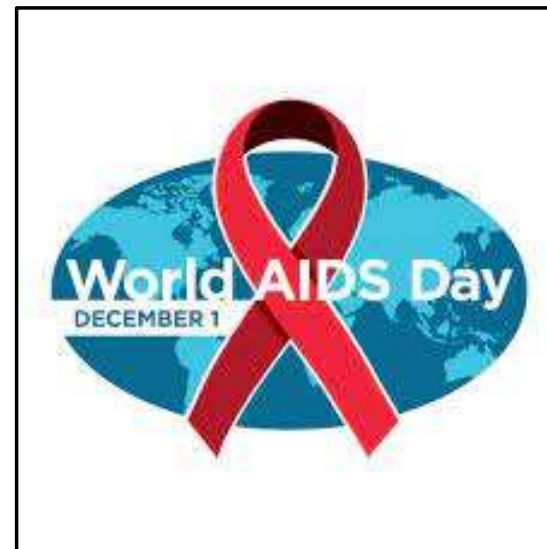
"Universal MH/DD/SAS strives to develop awareness and respect in order to celebrate the diverse backgrounds of people."



Global Diversity Awareness Month



Diwali



World AIDS Day





Asheville's OA,
Barbara McKenzie



Asheville's
PSR Mgr,
**Susan
McKinney**



Raleigh's QP,
Mallory Derringer

1-and 5-year Longevity Awards



***Contact your local Office Assistant
for your award.***



CONGRATS

The Skills System is a user-friendly set of emotion regulation skills, designed to help people of various ages and abilities, manage emotions. It helps us be aware of our current moment, think through the situation, and take goal-directed actions that align with our values.

Congratulations to the Raleigh staff below who completed Skills System Training.

Sarah Gupta

Brianna Taylor

Garland Greene

Shannon Gonzales

Tony Yingling

Keeva Drew

KUDOS

Nancy Madenyika says, *"I want to give recognition to retired Veteran, Mickie Soules who recently retired after working at Universal since 2009. She worked with the same member for 13 years."* Mickie was always dependable staff who had a wonderful rapport with both the member she worked and their family." Mickie shared that *"she enjoyed working at Universal and had many good times with the member she served."* She shared her job offered her flexibility to also take care of herself and her family and always found the office staff to be supportive and friendly. She is looking forward to having peace and freedom to relax." Thank you for your service, Mickie!



Asheville's Employment Specialist River Ashe and the member he supports Jalen, have started a new way to work on Jalen's interpersonal skills while at work. *"Jalen wins stuffed animals to give to little kids who come through the check out line. Jalen is starting to show some LOVE ! I'm so proud of his improvements!!"*



Morganton's Paige Thomas says, "Kudos to a few amazing people! Ingrid, Joi, Pattie, Amber, and Sabin!!! Everyone of theses special people either called, texted or emailed me to check on my husband and me after his heart attack. I was even offered to bring me a snack bag or anything I needed to the hospital. I mean how awesome is that? I don't think they knew how much it means to me. Just to have a group of people who truly care is one of the BEST things about the people at Universal !!! 😊. "

Patra Lowe says "Kudos to Ryan for having team spirit! Kudos to Michael for having perfect documentation! Kudos to Taylor for being CARF prepared! Kudos to Joy for all the kindness she shows her members! Kudos to Johnea for being willing to go the extra mile! Kudos to Susan for all she brings to PSR! Kudos to John for being so conscientious!"

Audrey Cobb says, "Kudos to Terry Bedford for all that he has to do with scheduling. Job well done!"

Zsa Zsa Johnson says, "Melissa, thank you for being someone I can count on to get things done in my absence and for making me laugh. 😊Ingrid, thank you for your never-ending positivity. It keeps me motivated." 😊

Sherry Douglas says, "Kudos to Patra Lowe Claytor for always making time to listen and then supporting me with identifying appropriate clinical solutions, to Michael Johnson for arranging his schedule to work directly with a member for several days, to Genell Carson and Shelia Moore for always respectfully collaborating with my QPs to support shared member services, to my Western Region QPs: Michael Johnson, Taylor Smith, Ryan Freeman, Joi Kirby, and Johnea Littlejohn for their commitment to provide positive assistance to their members during MCO changes/system updates!"

Nancy Yancy says, "Justin is amazing. He's organized, meticulous, and patient with me. I, sometimes have operator malfunction with technology. He is very good about communicating information and training. He is passionate about his role and that's nice to see in our current world. He treats people as professionals and respects feedback. Also, the Morganton office has a great crew we couldn't do without Paige."



Audrey Cobb says, "Kudos to Tony Yingling for being a dedicated employee and a great support for his staff and to Zsa Zsa Johnson for "hanging in there through it all."



Brittany Clemens says "I'd like to thank Alesia in New Bern. She is always ready to help with whatever we need and is just a pleasure to have in the office!"

Audrey Cobb says, "Thank you to all who reached out to me with prayers, calls, texts and gifts of kindness in the loss of my mother."

Mac Strickland says, "I want to give Kudos to Colton Sankey, Susan McKinney, and John Morrison, for their flexibility and their patience while working at Asheville PSR and our shifting daily demands. I also want to commend them for their hard work in making sure the Asheville PSR facility is clean, organized, and a safe place for persons served. They have followed through with every task and every bit of feedback I've thrown their way to create continuous improvement and it doesn't go unnoticed."

Christina Clatterbuck says "I would like to give Brandy Reagan a BIG shout out for going the extra mile for her members and their families. You make a difference Brandy!!"

Tony Yingling says, "Kudos to Sarah Gupta for growing the TBI Program and to AFL provider Wysheka Williams for providing support and care to the same member for over 10 years!"

Lori Gordon says, "KUDOS to Loretta Welcher for her hard work on the UMHS Record Scanning Project! Loretta not only completely reorganized the entire storage room, but she also applied her background in quality, Six Sigma and lean foundations and principles to the entire project and transformed it into an efficient and effective process that has a clear beginning and end."

Heather Everhart says, "Kudos go out the Training Department for making us CARF ready! All the refreshers and updates are greatly appreciated."



Back to School



Dolly Green's kids headed back to school, Abrianna and Kenna



Amber Anderson's 1st grader – Jo-Jo



Monique Simmons's daughter Nygeria



Shannon Gonzales' kids Matilda and David...and her husband became a US citizen!



Brittany Clemens' kids Jackson, Jalen and Brylie



Melissa Absher's daughter Maseia

Angela Messer's grandson Kylan

