

The Insider

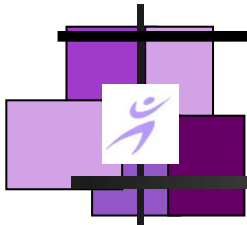
Apr 2024



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.*



SUPER Q - submitted by Terry Bedford

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Congratulations to Raleigh’s Sarah Gupta. Sarah is now a “Certified Brain Injury Specialist” through the Brain Injury Association of N.C. See what people have to say about Sarah.

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Hyacinth Hunt says “Sarah Gupta is the most compassionate, well-rounded, unboxed thinker that I know. She thinks about the needs of the individual and considers the emotions of all persons involved in a situation. Sarah is great at problem solving and is an expert at brainstorming. She quickly and light heartedly shares ideas that successfully fix issues that arise in the home and in the community. I hope to work with Sarah as long as I am an AFL provider.”

Mike Farrow says “I would say Sarah is so great in so many ways. Her knowledge, motivation, and her communication is definitely a blessing to us all. I thank you Sarah for making me a better AFL provider.”

Universal is now providing TBI waiver services through our Raleigh office.

The Winston office would like to recognize Joyce McCoy. Program Manager, LaTonja McLean says, *“Joyce has been providing RADSE services for 10 years with Universal and is a faithful and dutiful employee. She is quite flexible and always willing to help. Joyce provides services with her sister-in-law.*

Joyce has two children and one lovely granddaughter. She has influenced her daughter to work with us as well. Joyce is a BIG asset, and we are glad she is onboard with Universal.”



Employee Spotlight



Shinika McGhee (Burlington) has been providing services with Universal for 12 years! Regional Director Garry Wiley says, *“Ms. Shinika McGhee is a true asset to the Universal Family! She is dependable, loving and caring and is always smiling. She has all the characteristics needed to be a successful one-on-one.”* Thank you Shinika!



*Morganton’s ITFS Therapist,
Bailey Hardin*

People in need of assistance and who want to speak with a peer can call the Warmline at 1-855-PEERS NC (1-855-733-7762), and people who call 988 will have the option to connect with the Peer Warmline if they want to speak with a peer.

You are never alone!



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

**NC Launches Additional
Phone Support for People
Experiencing Mental Illness
or Substance Use Disorder**



Peer Warmline
1-855-Peers NC

Call someone who understands 24/7

Work Together NC Launches New Website for People with I/DD



Work Together NC

Possibility to Opportunity

We have exciting news for people with intellectual or other developmental disabilities (I/DD), their families and service providers in North Carolina. A statewide, federally funded initiative, [Work Together NC](#), has developed a website that serves as a "one stop" hub for the transition to adulthood. Users can search for services based on their needs, access checklists in the key domains of transition (i.e., guardianship, employment, postsecondary education), and develop personalized action plans for goal achievement. Transitioning to adulthood is hard – no matter what – but now it is a bit less complicated! Check out worktogethernc.com today. Have questions or feedback? Send an email to worktogethernc@med.unc.edu.

En español

Tenemos buenas noticias para individuos con discapacidades intelectuales o del desarrollo, sus familias y proveedores de servicio en Carolina del Norte. [Work Together NC](#), una iniciativa por todo el estado que es financiada federalmente, ha creado un sitio web con una colección de información para la transición a la vida adulta. Puede buscar servicios basados en sus necesidades, ver listas de verificación para cada de las áreas importantes de transición (por ejemplo: la tutela, el empleo, la educación postsecundaria) y crear planes de acción personalizados para realizar sus objetivos. La transición a la vida adulta puede ser difícil en general, ¡pero ahora es un poco más fácil! Visita worktogethernc.com hoy día. Si tiene alguna pregunta o comentario, puede contactar worktogethernc@med.unc.edu.





NCDHHS and the Department of Public Instruction announced the launch of the new [Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer \(S-EBT\) Program, or "SUN Bucks."](#) The program is expected to provide food to nearly a million schoolchildren in North Carolina during the summer months. Families will receive calls, emails and texts this week to notify them about the new program.

Families who are eligible for the SUN Bucks program will receive a one-time payment of \$120 per eligible child for the summer period. The SUN Bucks will be delivered to families on debit-like EBT cards, which can be used to purchase groceries at retailers that accept EBT, including most major grocery stores in North Carolina.

Your child may be eligible for a program if they participate in free or reduced-priced meals at school, participate in the Food and Nutrition Service's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), receive assistance from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, or qualify for Medicaid and have a household income below 185% of the federal poverty level.

If your child is already individually approved to receive free and reduced-price meals at school, you have until March 28, 2024 to update your address at your child's school to make sure your child receives their SUN Bucks card at the correct mailing address during the summer months.

Please visit ncdhhs.gov/sunbucks for eligibility criteria and other information. The website will be updated as new information becomes available.





presents

“ My Story Matters ”

My Story Matters is a new campaign of NCCDD to learn about North Carolinians with intellectual and other developmental disabilities (I/DD) across the state and the issues that are important to them.

Your story is important! Your story is also a form of advocacy. Sharing your story with us can help us advocate together with key decision makers, lawmakers, and people who can help us make life better for people with I/DD like you in North Carolina. And if you agree, your story might be shared on our social media platforms!

[Learn more and submit your story!](#)

En español

My Story Matters es una nueva campaña de NCCDD para aprender sobre los habitantes de Carolina del Norte con discapacidades intelectuales y otras discapacidades del desarrollo (I/DD) en todo el estado y los temas que son importantes para ellos.

¡Nuestra historia es importante! Su historia también es una forma de defensa. Compartir su historia con nosotros puede ayudarnos a abogar junto con los principales tomadores de decisiones, legisladores y personas que pueden ayudarnos a mejorar la vida de las personas con I/DD como usted en Carolina del Norte. Y si estás de acuerdo, ¡tu historia podría ser compartida en nuestras plataformas de redes sociales!

[¡Obtenga más información y envíe su historia!](#)



Smoke Alarms

Three out of every five home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, according to the National Fire Protection Association. Test your smoke alarms every month and replace the battery at least once a year. If the alarm makes a "chirping" sound, replace the battery immediately. Smoke alarms should be in every bedroom and in the common areas on each floor of a home. Mount them at least 10 feet from the stove to reduce false alarms, less than 12 inches from the ceiling and away from windows, doors and ducts. Smoke alarms can be interconnected wirelessly. That means, when one sounds, they all sound. A Consumer Product Safety Commission survey found this is the best way to notify everyone in a home if there is a fire. Be sure to purchase smoke alarms with the label of a reputable testing agency, like Underwriters Laboratories (UL).



Carbon Monoxide Detectors

Anything that burns fuel can potentially become a source of carbon monoxide, an invisible, odorless gas that can kill. CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each bedroom and on every level of the home. The safety tips for CO detectors mirror those of smoke alarms: change the batteries, test them and interconnect them, if possible. Also, make sure vents for your gas appliances (fireplace, dryer, stove and furnace) are free and clear of snow or debris.

Family Emergency Plan

The National Safety Council recommends every family have an emergency plan in place in the event of a natural disaster or other catastrophic event. Spring is a great time to review that plan with family members. Have a home and car emergency kit. The Federal Emergency Management Agency says an emergency kit should include one gallon of water per day for each person, at least a three-day supply of food, flashlight and batteries, first aid kit, filter mask, plastic sheeting and duct tape, and medicines. Visit the FEMA website for a complete list. The emergency plan also should include:

- A communications plan to outline how your family members will contact one another and where to meet if it's safe to go outside
- A shelter-in-place plan if outside air is contaminated; FEMA recommends sealing windows, doors and air vents with plastic sheeting.
- A getaway plan including various routes and destinations in different directions

Also, make sure your First Aid Kit is updated.

Here are the top ten note writer winners for the 1st Quarter of 2024.

2024 - 1 qtr results

JOCELYN PEARSALL

VERONICA MCPHERSON

SANDRA DENNING

DEBBIE HILL

NATALIIA FEDINA

SHALOUNDA COATS

MICHELLE BOOMER

SANDRA ROGERS

ANGELA PERRY

KATHY ELDER



The question above is regularly asked by the IT department when computer issues are reported. Restarting your computer can solve or prevent many computer issues, especially when done on a regular basis. Some common times to restart your computer are:

- When experiencing internet connection issues
- When the computer is running slowly
- When applications are not performing as expected
- When the computer has had a software update
- When the computer system unexpectedly freezes up
- When the computer experiences a driver or hardware error



At least once per week, it is also a good idea to shut down your computer when you are finished for the day or moving from one location to another. Regularly restarting your computer will help it run more smoothly by freeing up memory, resetting applications, and allowing software updates to be applied.

Instructions to restart your computer can be found on our website:

<https://umhs.net/update-reminder-two>

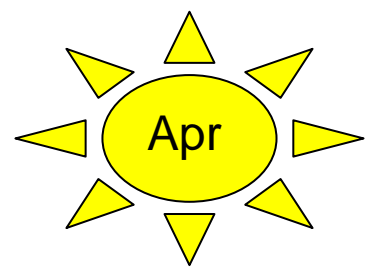
As always, please let us know if we can help in any way.

The best way to contact Universal's IT Department is by emailing trackit@umhs.net

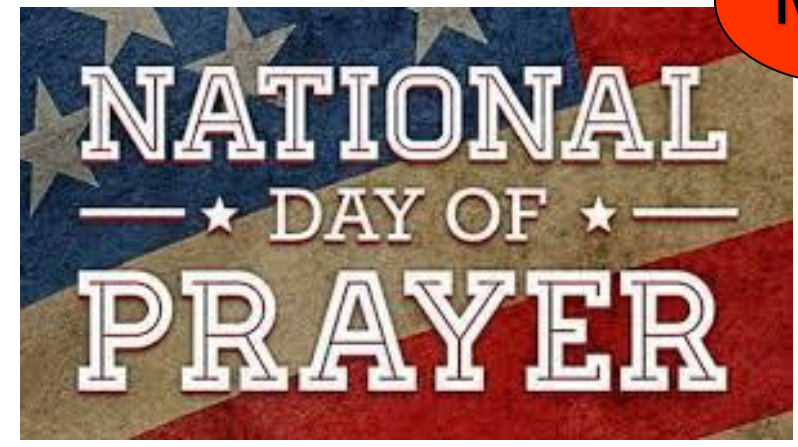


Universal's Cultural Sensitivity Mission Statement

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



Autism Awareness Day



National Day of Prayer



Juneteenth Freedom Day





**CONGRATS
MRS.
WILKINS**



October 21, 2023, Sherry Douglas married her college sweetheart Howard Wilkins. The two met when they were freshmen at UNC-A and dated the entire time they were at the University. Later in life they reconnected and two years later they decided to wed! Congrats!

1-and 5-year Longevity Awards

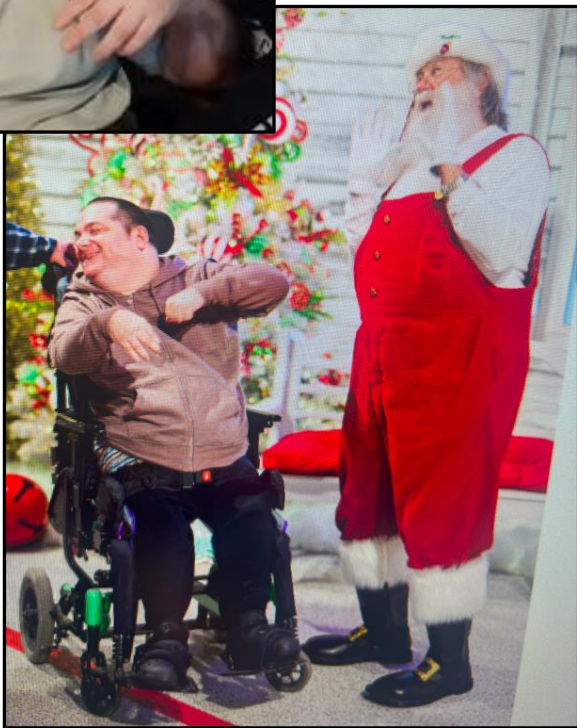


***Contact your local Office Assistant
for your award.***





Raleigh's "BJ" enjoying a photo shoot with his nieces and loving on Santa!



<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/q1J8SvQ9FTXwc7kT/?mibextid=7TVuMX>



Raleigh's Felicia was crowned Valentine's Day Queen at her Day Program!



Raleigh's Parker was accepted to the potty-training program in Georgia and graduated. He and his parents have received outstanding training and support from his phenomenal therapists. Parker and his family had such an amazing experience!!
Go Parker!



"Thanks" from the Forest City folks.



New Bern's Christmas Party fun!



Winston's Valentines Chili fun!



Winston's Christmas Party fun!



Audrey Cobb says
*"Kudos to Tony Yingling for all his help. How he assists his staff is impressive.
WHAT A MAN, WHAT A MAN!!"*



Christina Clatterbuck says *"I would like to thank Sabin for all of his help! What a Lifesaver he is!"*

Brandy Reagan says *"Shout out to Lori Hutchinson and Heather McCarthy for going above and beyond for Aleshia of the New Bern office. When policies at the state level changed, they stepped up to make sure Aleshia had all her needs met. Having a love for this career goes beyond a paycheck. Thank you for all you two do!"*

Ingrid Freeman says, *"Kudos to Zsa Zsa Johnson for her willingness to help everyone on the team in a moment's notice!"*

Sherry Wilkins says, *"Kudos to my entire QP team (Michael Johnson, Taylor Smith, Joi Kirby, Ryan Freeman and Johnea Littlejohn) for their exceptional work during CARF while I was on my honeymoon! Also "Kudos to Genell Carson for all the supportive conversations she had with me during my nuptial planning! And Kudos to Patra Lowe and Ingrid Freeman for all their support and help while I was on leave for my wedding and during CARF."*



Barb McKenzie says, "Kudos to Morgan Dawkins, Pattie Fries, Lori Gordon, and Ingrid Freeman for being helpful, kind, and patient as I learn all the processes in the Universal organization. Their insights and knowledge have helped me become more efficient and productive."

Tracy Frye says "Kudos to Tamara Bedford for jumping right into the CQI world and taking on a wide range of projects! Tamara, you are rocking it!!!"

Heather Everhart says "Since the OA meeting, Accounting would like to recognize the OAs for helping to make the payroll process smoother. Thank you to all those involved in getting everything completed."

Christina Clatterbuck says, "a HUGE Kudos to all the ladies in the Eastern region: Brittany, Monique, Brandy, Mrs. Carr, and Alesia!! They always work as a TEAM while making an impact on the families we serve!"



Melissa Abshire says "Kudos to Zsa Zsa for always supporting us in any way she possibly can. She always goes the extra mile for the OA's. Zsa Zsa will jump in knee deep with us to make sure all of our duties are correct and complete the right way. She always has a great listening ear."

I would like to give Kudos to LaTonja McLean for bringing life back into our office. She was greatly missed and forever grateful for her coming back to us here at Universal. She is definitely a staple of Universal.

Kudos to April Dunlap for moving into the fulltime QP position for the WS office. She is a great asset to this office.

Kudos to Tamara Bedford for always answering my questions work related or not."

