

The Insider

July 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.*



Longest Tenured Employees

Nowadays, it is a rarity for an individual to remain at one company for any length of time. Evidently Universal is doing something right in that we have two professional staff and 2 direct care individuals who have endured the stay. We are so proud to announce that we have 4 wonderful employees who remain steadfast in their efforts to make Universal be the best in the business for over 20 years. Congratulations to some of the best! Read about them in the next few pages.....



Patra Lowe says, "From milestones achieved to lessons learned, from projects completed to challenges embraced, from deadlines met to goals surpassed. My work at Universal is a journey unsurpassed. I cherish my friendships and family I have made; my memories of over 20+ years are smiles I embrace. Thanks to Universal for all the opportunities I have been given. I am grateful for a company I can be proud of."

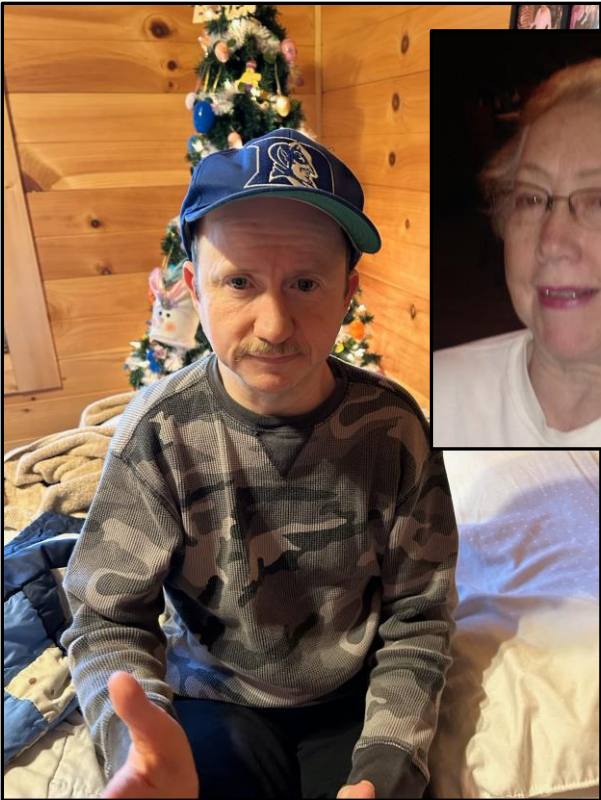


Patra Lowe, Clinical Director

Ingrid Freeman, Human Resources Director



Ingrid Freeman says "I have worked for the company since December of 2003. I have experienced a lot of growth in various ways. I began as an Office Assistant and grew to HR Director. My coworkers are friends, and it has been special to watch the dynamics of my work family change over the years. I would not change a thing and appreciate all the caring, love, and correction that I have received over the years. Cheers to 20+ more years!"



**Like
Family**



Wanda DeHart says *“I’ve worked with Universal now for 20+ years. Has the company changed? YES!! There is now better pay, combined and online training, and more concern for the staff. There are more bonuses; plus, the longevity monetary gifts are great. The company has made some needed changes, and I feel it is still improving!”*

Judy Devries says, *“My son and I have been with Universal since October of 2003. We have experienced a professional, kind, loving and supportive staff. Some staff members are like family to us. Thank you for being there for us all these years.”*

Oh NO, thank you Judy. We hope you know how much you and Eric are appreciated!

The best thing about Universal is that we have always worked directly with people who are caring. My grandson has always felt comfortable with each of the directors, office staff, and direct care people; in fact, he has made friends with many of the “company people.” He still asks about many of them and sends them messages. He remembers that they made concentrated efforts to come to his special events. He has benefited so much from meeting and getting to know each of these special people. He looks forward to seeing each person, and when he does see them, it is the BEST! The people and his interactions with Universal folks make all my efforts worth it.”

Thank you, Wanda. You and Mitchell are appreciated!

Christopher D. Kern, PA-C has been with Universal Mental Health for 20 years. Chris started his career in the United States Army and is a proud veteran. Chris and his wonderful wife Leslie reside in Morganton, NC.

Chris has worked in Universal's Taylorsville, Morganton, Forest City, and the Asheville office. He retired May 31st, 2024. Graduating from Duke University, he is a proud member of the Academy of Physician Assistants, and the North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants.

Through the years, Chris worked for ARP Phoenix, Foothills Area Program, Broughton Hospital and on to Universal Mental Health Services.

Chris's patients served loved him. His caring manner and sense of humor was priceless. The patients always left smiling. TEAMWORK was a big part of Chris's philosophy. The communication between service providers from the AFL's to the Group Homes, and Universal's employees and staff was greatly appreciated. Chris was all about finding the best treatment for specific mental health symptoms and researching to find the best possible care for every individual patient. Chris would also provide this information to the patient and/or care provider to help them understand mental health symptoms and their treatment. Chris was the best physician you could ever have - just ask any of his patients. Universal has been very lucky to have had Christopher Kern, PA-C and Chris has expressed he enjoyed working with such a great group of people. Thank you, Chris. You will certainly be missed!



Marilyn Porter was a Regional Director for the eastern region of Universal Mental Health. For those who knew her, she was a dynamic personality with endless dedication to the people that she served as well as her family. When you worked with Marilyn, you became family. Marilyn came to Universal in September of 2011 and through her time at the agency impacted countless employees and people that we serve. Her advocacy and spirit embodied the mission of "Caring people, caring for people", both employees, and the people we serve. Marilyn passed away on March 27, 2020, after a courageous fight with cancer. Her loss was one that was felt statewide and farther. Her legacy will live on through this scholarship.

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

The scholarship will be selected by a 6-person scholarship committee made up of 6 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, sex, religion, age, disability, or political affiliation.

**Applications will be accepted between July 1-15.
The recipient will be announced August 1st.**

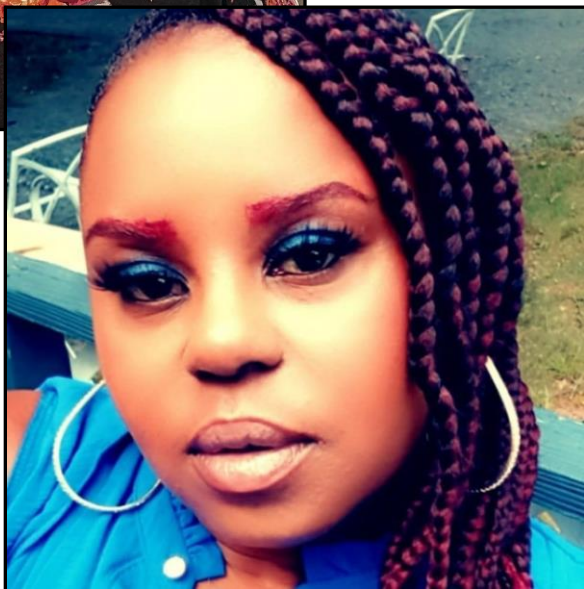
[To apply, click here.](#)



*Universal's newest
Human Resources Assistant,
Jennifer Rowe*



*Universal's newest
Registered Nurse,
Roberta Kaufer*



*Winston's newest
QP, LaSheka King*



*New Bern's newest
QP, Anna Lundquist*

Member and Family Education Videos

Partners is pleased to announce that member and family education videos in both English and Spanish are now available on Partners' training website, www.partnerstraining.org.



Please share with your patients that Partners has developed some brief informational videos for our members and their families. Current selections include:

- NC Innovations Waiver,
- Registry of Unmet Needs,
- IDD and TBI services Outside the Innovations Waiver
- 1915(i) services.

These videos are available for members to view online at any time. All are welcome to view these informational sessions.



Symptoms of auditory processing disorder:

- Difficulty following directions
- Asking for information to be repeated
- Trouble telling the difference between words that sound similar
- Lack of focus, especially in noisy surroundings
- Struggling to follow conversations
- Trouble expressing thoughts and feelings clearly



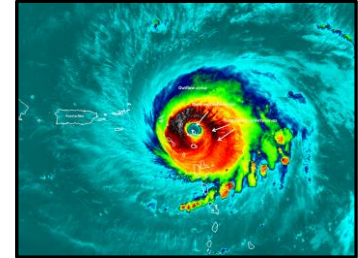
The Goat in a Boot	The Ant in Pink Pants	The Snake with a Shake	The Horse on the Course	The Zuto from Pluto	The Whale with Purple Pigtails	The Octopus who Knocked a Puss
gas			has		was	



What is the difference between a Hurricane Watch and Hurricane Warning?

Watch: Hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are *possible* *somewhere* within the specified area.

Warning: Hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are *expected* *somewhere* within the specified area. Evacuate immediately if so ordered.



What is the difference between a Tropical Storm Warning and a Tropical Storm Watch?

Watch: Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are *possible* *somewhere* within the specified area within 36 hours.

Warning: Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are *expected* *somewhere* within the specified area within 36 hours.

What is the difference between a Storm Surge Watch and a Storm Surge Warning?

Watch: There is a *possibility* of life-threatening storm surge flooding from rising water moving inland *somewhere* within the specified area, generally within 48 hours.

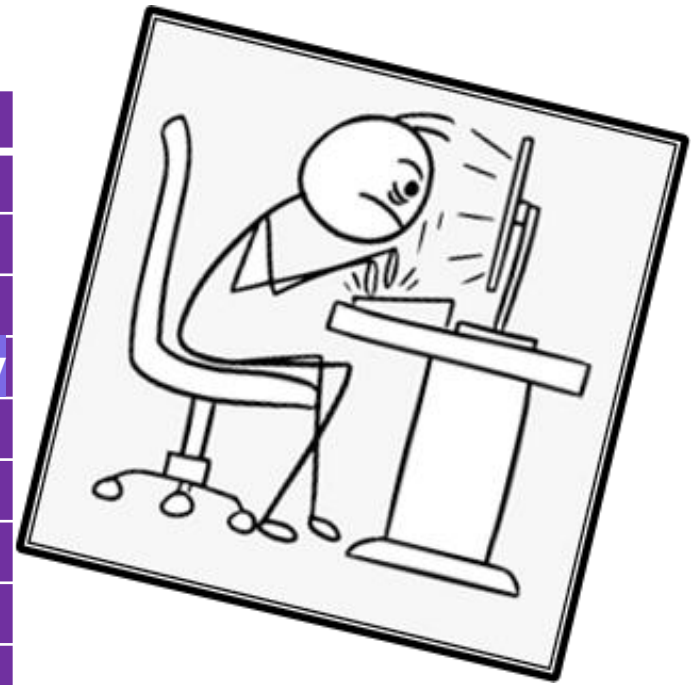
Warning: There is a *danger* of life-threatening storm surge flooding from rising water moving inland *somewhere* within the specified area, generally within 36 hours. If you are under a storm surge warning, check for evacuation orders from your local officials.



Here are the top ten note writer winners for the 2nd Quarter of 2024.



- Mary Cooper
- Denisia Harper
- William Jones
- Jeffrey Rudolph
- Wyllene Kelly-Burney
- Colnedia Burke
- Nataliia Fedina
- Rhonda Evans
- Amanda Hensley
- Shalounda Coats



Multi-factor authentication (MFA) is a multi-step account login process that requires users to enter more information than just a password. For example: along with a password, users might be asked to enter a code sent to their email, text message, authenticator app, answer a secret question, or scan a fingerprint. Multi-factor authentication acts as an additional layer of security to prevent unauthorized access to accounts, even if the password has been stolen. All of Universal's user accounts ending in @umhs.net are protected using MFA.

While not all websites and applications offer multi-factor authentication, it is highly recommended to enable MFA for all your personal online accounts when available. Banking sites, healthcare portals, utilities sites, and any other application or website that contains personal information typically provide the ability to setup MFA. Enabling MFA will help protect your private information if your login ID and password are compromised. Each website or application may have a slightly different method for setting up and using MFA, but the process should be similar. Read the help sections of the website or contact support of each site to inquire about setting up MFA.

NOTE: If MFA is configured to use your phone number or an application on your phone, it is important to update the MFA information with each site if you get a new phone number or a new phone. For questions or issues related to your UMHS account, please send an email to trackit@umhs.net



Universal's 1st (BASIC) Basic Administrative Skills Information Curriculum Attendees June 06, 2024



Joi

Paige

Morgan

Sheila

Lori

Susan

Sabin

Patra

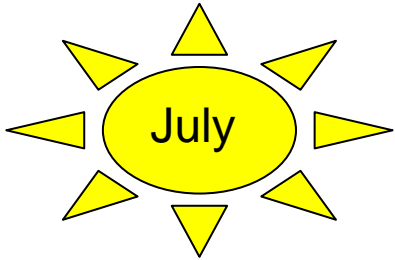
Christy

Beverly



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."



Americans With Disabilities Act



International Day for People of African Descent



National Recovery Month



Just keep trying!!!



<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/Xtkzy9YiRQRakYtD/?mibextid=WC7FNe>

1-and 5-year Longevity Awards



Contact your local Office Assistant for your award.





Asheville's Brett hard at work at the local Tractor Supply. Brett's staff River Ashe says "Brett recently received a certificate for going the extra mile. He consistently helps people with bagged feed, fencing and various loadouts. Brett is a team player that is always recognized. I am always boastful of the compliments he receives for his courtesy and discipline. He enjoys what he does and it shows through his actions."
YOU ROCK Brett and River!



Congrats to Universal's President, Alicia Greer Brown on the birth of her newest grandson Luke Alexander Austin. Big sister Olivia is smitten!



Universal's Tracy Frye (L) and Amber Anderson (R) participated in "Kinderpalooza." School kids received screenings, bookbags and participated in other activities. **FUN, FUN, FUN!**



Say hello to Marian Morris, (New Bern) who has been providing services with Universal for 18 years! Thank you, Marian!



OFFICE FUN TIMES



Universal's Winston office hosted an ice cream social today for staff and members. Plenty of games, fun and ice cream!



Tony Yingling says *“Kudos to Carletta Moore for being an outstanding staff and person!*

Kudos to Brianna Taylor for managing Arbor House during its time of transition!”



Monique Simmons says *“Kudos to Althea Watson for being such a sweet person and always responding to emails in a polite manner.”*

Paige Thomas says *“I want to let everyone know how much I appreciate Ingrid Freeman and Morgan Dawkins. They are always so helpful and understanding even when I mess up LOL! I could not ask for 2 better people no matter my questions, concerns or just a need to chat. They are always nearby. Also, to everyone I work with at Universal that either stops by the office or calls. I just want y’all to know you bring something special and unique to the table and I enjoying laughing and catching up with each one of y’all!”*

Latonja Mclean says *“I want to give kudos to LaSheka King. She is our new QP at the Winston office. She has done great with settling in here! She has shown great initiative with getting to know the members, guardians, and staff. Her experience as a QP gives her an edge to further develop relationships in the community to better serve the population. She shares Winston’s vision and is a true asset to Universal!”*



Ingrid Freeman says, “A BIG shout out to Drema Greer for going extra miles to produce great newsletters! It can be challenging to get the information from various sources, and somehow, she manages to pull it off each quarter! The numerous prompts and friendly reminders are appreciated as we are all busy! Drema is so effective with this endeavor for our awesome newsletter!”



Patra Lowe says, “A big Kudos to Colton Sankey who graduated from Western Carolina with his MSW and married his high school sweetheart in the same month!!”

Sarah Gupta says, “Kudos to the Raleigh Residential Team. It is awesome to work with such a dedicated and supportive group of people that do so much for the members we support!

To Zsa Zsa and Audrey for their support with AFLs and TBI programs.

To the TBI AFL providers, Michael Farrow, Helen King, Taneshia Joseph, Rick Rowland, Shavonne Harrington, Amelia Peebles, Tony Wright. Thanks to you all for embracing TBI services and helping to make a difference in the lives of the people they support.”



Sherry Wilkins says “Kudos to Denisia Harper for her commitment to participate in a special training with Mission Hospital. It allowed her member to return home and not require facility nursing care. Kudos to Vanessa Williams for recognizing subtle health issues regarding her member then immediately requesting emergency medical assistance. To Michael Johnson, Taylor Smith, Ryan Freeman, and Joi Kirby for supporting Forest City members and DSPs while the QP is out on maternity leave. To Lori Gordon for the OA support she is providing to my QPs while they provide interim care and supervision to I/DD periodic service recipients in the Forest City office.

