

The Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) is in a very unique position to create a new approach to human services and needs based programs in this State. We recognize, more than ever, the need to work with families holistically rather than simply determining eligibility and waiting for self-sustainability. Our staff approaches an individual who walks into an MDHS office with the understanding they are not asking for a “hand-out” but in fact, they are asking for a “hand-up.”

MDHS is collaborating with other agencies and stakeholders to build a better Mississippi. We began in 2016 by focusing our efforts on the four priorities described below, and we are reengineering our offices to offer a multi-generational, collaborative approach.

- Invest in children and families through workforce development and training;
- Improve opportunities for individuals to make healthy self-sustaining choices;
- Increase department capacity and efficiencies; and
- Improve systems.

The priorities listed above align with our mission for a more effective, efficient, and open government. Focusing on these priorities will allow the state to realize the commonalities between social capital, health and well-being, economic supports, education, and training which will ultimately allow the state to maximize its resources by eliminating duplication of services.

INVEST IN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

MDHS’ success will be measured by the success of the clients served by the agency. A family-centered, multi-generational approach will be developed to invest in early intervention programs that will improve life outcomes for children and families. MDHS is doing this through the support of early involvement in case decision-making, and providing access to activities which lead to livable wages through higher education including vocational and technical training. The MDHS approach continues to recognize the importance of the family unit as it relates to the overall success of each of the members of the household.

The county MDHS offices are going through major changes to accommodate the case management approach to all individuals receiving services through the programs offered. We will be reducing the number of Eligibility Workers and increasing the number of Case Managers to accomplish our multi-generational approach. We have already seen more cost and customer efficiencies without creating an overall increase in staffing.

MDHS has proven through the years that we are very proficient in determining eligibility timely, accurately, and efficiently. However, the mentality of simply moving individuals in-and-out must be replaced with an effort to move them to self-sustainability. Assisting individuals with a needs based program is providing them with a supplemental or temporary support as they move to initial employment and beyond to greater employment. Case management staff will be assigned to applicants to guide them through this process and then track outcomes.

The overarching goal is to stabilize the home and then provide an opportunity for greater individual success for household members. Assisting the adult in finding employment is only the first step if children are also part of the home. MDHS Case Managers must also look back and see how the children may be assisted. Providing resources for the child to be exposed to training, counseling, mentoring and tutoring will provide stability for current and future healthy choices.

Partners for Success in Workforce Development.

Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES). We have entered into a partnership with MDES so they may provide Job Readiness Assessments (JRA), Employment Development Plans (EDP), soft-skills training, resume building, etc. to all adults who apply for services at MDHS. The first steps were taken to implement this plan in the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program which affects approximately 5,800 cases. The second step is currently under way to be implemented during this fiscal year will be the individuals in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) which affects approximately 253,000 cases. This also includes ensuring each of the applicants are entered into the Mississippi Works system. Therefore, a request for assistance through MDHS is also a request for assistance to find employment. Prior to this agreement, MDHS and MDES were duplicating services with no single plan of action for the individual. The partnership with MDES also includes allowing them to co-locate in strategic MDHS offices for efficiency in services for those seeking assistance as well as the taxpayer who funds these programs.

Mississippi Board of Community and Junior Colleges (MBCJC). MDHS continues to build on the partnership with MBCJC to develop opportunities for training and education. The collaboration has grown significantly over the past six months and will continue to develop new opportunities for those we seek to serve. The MBCJC also is working closely with MDHS in our efforts with the SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) program. MBCJC has also partnered with MDHS to provide Child Care Provider training at no cost to the state.

Institutions for Higher Education (IHL). MDHS is working to partner with IHL to offer individuals an opportunity to complete their degree the Complete 2 Compete (C2C). There are a significant number of

adults who have multiple college credits but have not received a degree. This program will provide an additional resource for those seeking self-sufficiency.

Eight State Universities. MDHS has reached out to each of the eight state universities to establish Youth Development programs. There has been initial information that indicates as many as 40% of all athletes attending the state universities are already parents. Many of these are non-custodial parents. MDHS and the universities developed programs to assist these athletes and multiply the affect by letting them reach out to the youth in their communities. This may be the only exposure many of the youth will have to university campuses. We will also offer career technical training in an effort to guide the youth to future success.

Mississippi Community Education Center/Families First Resource Centers (FFRC). Dr. Nancy New in their capacity as leaders in the FFRCs have expanded their services to include counseling, mentoring, vocational training, career development, tutoring, forensic interviewing, fatherhood initiatives, Healthy Teens for a Better Mississippi, parenting classes, etc. These services are now offered in every county of the state. MDHS and FFRC will continue to offer services as appropriate based on the needs of each community and individual. The FFRCs will also be a valuable resource for the MDHS case management staff as they offer solutions to those who seek our services.

IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS

As part of the multi-generational approach, MDHS is committed to improving opportunities for individuals to make healthy self-sustaining decisions. The partnerships we have developed over the previous three years will continue to expand and become the base of operation. MDHS recognizes the need to maximize resources and multiply opportunities. With shrinking state funds, we must identify duplicated and overlapping services to eliminate. In doing so, we will identify public/private partnerships that will produce cost savings with added capacity and performance based outcomes. This will also ensure the elimination of Broad Based Categorical Eligibility and not waiving the ABAWD requirements will not adversely affect those we seek to serve.

The MDHS case management staff offer a guided approach through the complicated process of accessing resources. With your leadership, the agency partnered with the majority of other related agencies to produce the first approved Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan. This partnership provides for four Workforce Areas around the state where the participating agencies will be housed in one location for maximum service delivery.

The FFRCs will provide a valuable resource to identify ways to improve opportunities for individuals. In addition, organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, and Jobs for Mississippi Graduates are available for additional capacity building.

IMPROVE DEPARTMENT CAPACITY AND EFFICIENCY

MDHS has identified multiple opportunities to increase capacity and efficiency. Evaluating each of the 13 divisions within the agency has exposed cost allocation and matching deficiencies. MDHS will maximize federal funds while reducing state general funds.

There will be further analysis to determine how the agency will shed antiquated and inefficient policies and procedures. Every contract, sub-grant and MOU will be evaluated. In addition, further accountability will be implemented within the agency. An Internal Audit Department has been established to provide the necessary oversight of operations both administrative and programmatic. This too will provide opportunities for improvement and efficiencies.

Effective October 1, 2016, MDHS entered into a contract with Young Williams, a private nationally recognized Child Support organization based in Mississippi, to operate the MDHS local offices for child support. This action was taken as a result of reductions in the MDHS budgets, space needs for the recently created Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services (MDCPS) and a desire to modernize the program. During the first several months, MDHS will transfer operations in a way that will maintain current operations with no changes. i.e. same offices, same processes, same employees, etc. With this action, all 82 county Child Support operations are managed by this private company.

During the Young Williams pilot program for 17 counties in Southwest Mississippi, it was proven successful both with results and with saving Mississippi tax dollars. MDHS estimates there will be a minimum of \$1 million in cost savings with the potential for \$2 million in State funds saved. The state-wide transition to Young Williams is complex as it involves over 250,000 cases. All MDHS Child Support staff were offered jobs at or above the MDHS pay rate, with similar benefits and retirement options. Young Williams has designed the transition to take place over a period of time to avoid disruption of services.

There is ongoing work to reorganize the agency to align more completely with your priorities. Specifically, a Workforce Development Unit within Field Operations has been created while eliminating the Division of Family Foundation and Support. This was accomplished by utilizing the FFRCs to provide the functionality previously administered by state employees. This model will be replicated across the agency .

IMPROVE SYSTEMS

The industry standard in human services across the nation is moving more toward an automated technology driven delivery system. Mississippi, and specifically MDHS, has lagged behind in this critical area for many years. The four legacy systems and three stand-alone systems within the agency lack efficiency and are tremendously expensive to maintain. However, they have proven to be workhorses that could provide more capacity with the proper updates. MDHS has worked for two years with the ITS procurement process and finally has the approval to move forward with the updates necessary to truly affect positive and lasting change. We have also created in-house referral systems that ensure the Generation Plus (gen+) approach remains viable.

The efficiency and cost savings realized from the updates currently being implemented, will provide the front-line county employees a greater resource for achieving the multi-generational goals identified above. The agency utilizes technology to further identify how best to allocate agency resources. This includes staff assignment.

ISSUES OF CONCERN IDENTIFIED IN PRIOR LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The issues that were identified in the prior legislative session were centered around the bill known as H.O.P.E. Act. The East Coast group, FGA, worked with the legislature during the last session to offer strategies to address their perceived “loopholes” in the Medicaid, SNAP and TANF programs. The major issues include:

Loopholes in Eligibility – FGA states the Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) option, which allows the resources of applicants to be disregarded, produces fraud and abuse. The state has begun the process effective July 1, 2019. Time-frame for policy re-writes and system re-design took approximately six to design and implement. Costs associated with this change have been minimal.

Start Checking Assets – With the elimination of BBCE we now are federally required to “check assets”. Mississippi is confident we can do this in a very effective and least invasive way possible. This requires cooperation and automation between state agencies, financial institutions, etc. The agreements with state agencies would not be difficult but, automation would be very expensive requiring an initial up-front investment of state funds. I would need to include this additional funds request in my 2018 budget with your approval. The estimated cost associated with this change would be approximately \$1.5 million conservatively.

Codify Work Requirements – The WIOA State Plan specifically addresses both TANF and SNAP caseloads in the Workforce Development initiative.

Improve Eligibility Verification and Monitoring – The current eligibility verification and monitoring process with SNAP and TANF is significant . We spend more than \$3 million per year to utilize all federal match opportunities. In addition, the MOU with MDES is intended to further the income verification process with minimal costs associated with this match.

Improve Identity Verification – The FGA report targets improved identity verification as a solution to identity fraud etc. in the Medicaid program. The SNAP federal regulations allow the state to pend eligibility verification for head of household but not for the other household members.

Share Data Across Agencies – MDHS has executed multiple MOUs with the specific agencies associated with the needs based programs we administer. The WIOA State Plan as well as the State Workforce Development Board have been driving forces in the data sharing project. NSPARC reports the new “hubs” for real time data sharing will be fully available July 2019.

Add Additional Programs to the National Accuracy Clearinghouse (NAC) - MDHS has lead the nation in developing the NAC with five states as part of the original consortium through a pilot program allowed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The national office recently announced they would allow an expansion of this project. The USDA is not offering additional funding but, Mississippi agreed to continue to lead this effort. The governance structure for the program is being developed with our federal partners and there are 22 states who have expressed interest in joining the project. Other programs, such as Medicaid, has definitely been a key factor in the design. This took approximately 12 months of onboarding associated with this process.

Law of 16

We have Identified the need for professional and personal development for both our staff and those we serve. The Law of 16 Development Program has been implemented agency wide and we are now working with other state agencies to train their staff. In addition, we have implemented this program to address the needs of those we serve. We see this as a way to eliminate one of the last barriers to finding true self sufficiency for those who seek to not be dependent on needs based programs. Empowering individuals and families is transformational in the field of Human Services and we are more than willing to be leaders in this area.

CHILDCARE FRAUD AND BIOMETRICS

The National Child Care Reauthorization Bill passed in 2015 with final rules received at the end of September 2016 imposes a multitude of changes on states. Many have called these changes unfunded

mandates. Working with partner agencies as well as the SECAC, MDHS submitted the Child Care State Plan which was conditionally approved. Our federal partners are allowed the state up to 18 months to develop a working plan to submit for approval followed by statewide implementation. Fraud prevention and a quality are two of the key components of the new requirements

SUMMARY AND MOVING FORWARD

The agency will continue to move forward to identify cost savings and efficiencies to ensure we are responsive to those seeking our services but, more importantly to the taxpayers of Mississippi. MDHS is rebranding the agency to move towards Workforce Development centered practice.

MDHS is up for the challenge. Restructuring human services to meet the ever evolving needs specific to Mississippi is worth the energy and effort. Please find enclosed a quick view of highlights from each of the program areas.

Respectfully,

John Davis, Executive Director

Mississippi Department of Human Services



Accessing the Mississippi Department of Human Services Childcare Resources:

- The Child Care Certificate Program is a federally funded program designed to provide parents with child care tuition assistance.
- The State Early Childhood Advisory Council (SECAC) and MDHS have released a joint statement on the future of early childhood in Mississippi, including the future of programs funded by the Federal Child Care and Development Fund.
- The State Plan: A Family-Based Unified and Integrated Early Childhood System outlines an early childhood system underpinned by common case management, a collaborative referral process, and an integrated data system unlike any other in the country. Implementation of Mississippi's early childhood system is a collaborative effort of all state agencies, the office of Governor Bryant, early care and education providers, and the SECAC.
- For more information on each of these topics, visit MDHS.MS.GOV.



FAMILIES FIRST EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



Early childhood education encompasses a critical stage of human development, from birth through age eight, that forms the foundation for a child's future health, well-being and learning.



WWW.MSCEC.ORG



WWW.FAMILIESFIRSTFORMS.ORG

Introduction

Families First for Mississippi works directly with the Mississippi Department of Human Services and the Mississippi Community College Board to support families across the state by providing early childhood services that help parents and caregivers identify high-quality childcare services and learning experiences.

Through this partnership, Mississippi Early Learning Standards and Guidelines have been revised and updated to ensure that childcare providers have up-to-date and research-based resources for use in individual childcare centers.

- The Mississippi Early Learning Standards and Guidelines:
 - Describe goals for children from birth through age four.
 - Focus on cognitive development in core subjects like literacy, mathematics, science and social studies.
 - Support a play-based approach to learning that includes social, emotional and physical development in children.
- Families First for Mississippi is a partner in the Early Childhood Cross Agency Collaborative, along with Head Start, the Mississippi Department of Education, Mississippi Department of Human Services, Mississippi Community College Board, and the Mississippi State Department of Health.

Defining characteristics of high-quality childcare services:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) provides guidance and national standards that help families make the right choice when they are looking for child care centers, preschool or kindergarten.
- Mississippi Department of Human Services provides a childcare provider search that allows families to review information on child care providers prior to choosing a center.

The Early Child Academy through Families First provides customized support.

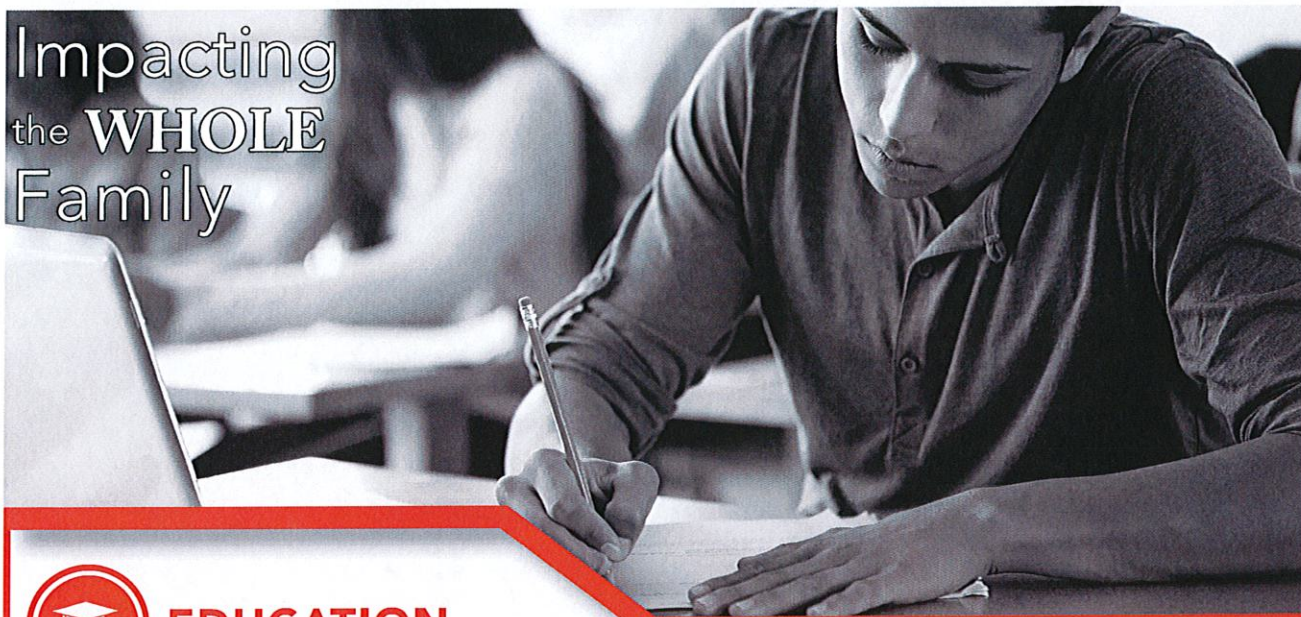
- The mission of the Early Childhood Academy is to provide families and child care providers with ongoing, high-quality technical assistance and professional development through resource and referral services, thus ensuring a nurturing learning environment that promotes readiness.
- The ECA provides onsite instructional coaching and technical assistance.
- Early Childhood Coaches and Professional Development Specialists are located throughout the state of Mississippi, and work directly with childcare providers and families to provide customized support.

Early childhood support through Families First for Mississippi includes:

- Training and professional development sessions for parents and childcare providers
- Providing access to instructional resources (books, toys, games, etc.) for checkout by childcare providers and parents
- Supporting the implementation of the newly revised Mississippi Early Learning Standards and Guidelines



Impacting the **WHOLE** Family



EDUCATION

*"Our diploma program provides
an opportunity for brighter futures."*

We are providing an alternative avenue for at risk high school seniors to obtain an accredited high school diploma as well as adults desiring to earn a high school diploma in a flexible environment.

Families First for Mississippi Diploma Program:

- ♦ Accredited diploma-issuing institution
- ♦ Credits as required by the state department of education
- ♦ Online academic courses
- ♦ Self-paced learning environment



Partners In Education

The diploma that can be obtained upon completing the Families First High School Diploma Program is issued by New Summit School through its distance learning division.

New Learning Resources School District (NLRSD) is accredited by the Mississippi Department of Education and AdvancED: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

For more information about Families First High School Diploma, visit
www.FamiliesFirstforMs.org

Dr. Nancy New, Co-Executive Director
of Families First for Mississippi

A service provided by Mississippi Community Education Center

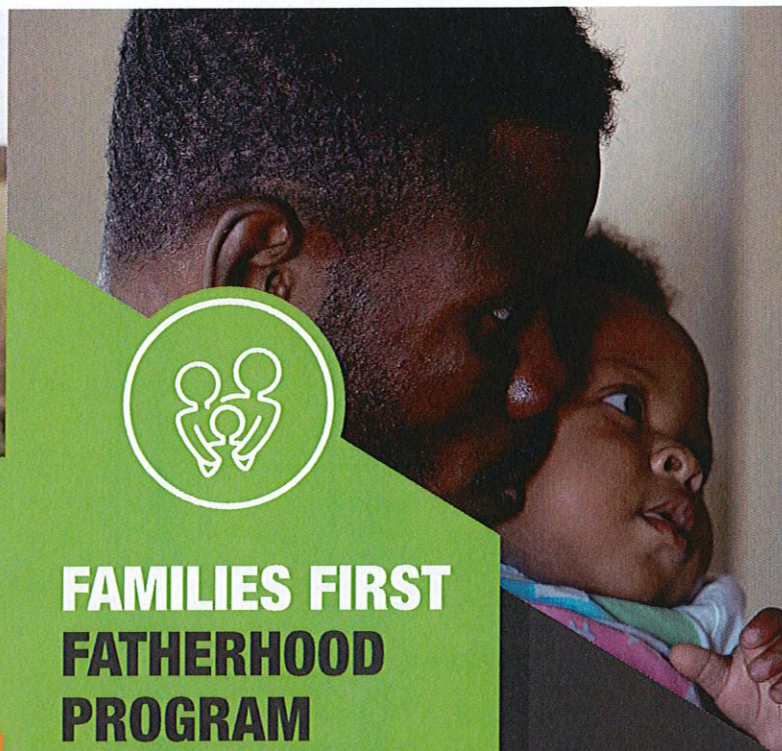


FamiliesFirstForMS.org



Program Contact

Frank Wynn
Fatherhood Coordinator
(601) 366-6405
fwynn@mscec.org



FAMILIES FIRST FATHERHOOD PROGRAM

Families First Fatherhood Program is a unique program designed to equip fathers with self-awareness, compassion, responsibility and loyalty to create healthy relationships within their families. Families First Fatherhood Program focuses on cultivating healthy habits for positive character development and growth for a well-rounded man and father.



WWW.MSCEC.ORG



WWW.FAMILIESFIRSTFORMS.ORG



Philosophy Behind the Program

The philosophy behind the program supports the growth and development of fathers and children as caring and compassionate people who treat themselves, others, and the environment with respect and dignity. This philosophical basis of caring and compassion forms the underlying structure that constitutes the values that are taught in the program.

- Fathering and the 24/7 Dad
- Boyhood to Manhood
- Dealing with Anger
- Knowing Myself
- Family Ties
- Sex, Love, and Relationships
- Power and Control
- Competition
- Improving My Communication Skills
- Fun with the Kids
- Stress, Alcohol, and Work

The purpose of parenting is to protect and prepare children to survive and thrive in the kind of society in which they live.

Fatherless Facts

Did you know that children from a fatherless home are:

- Four times more likely to live in poverty
- More likely to suffer emotional and behavioral problems
- At two times greater risk of infant mortality
- More likely to go to prison
- More likely to commit crime
- Seven times more likely to become pregnant as a teen
- More likely to face abuse and neglect
- More likely to abuse drugs and alcohol
- Two times more likely to suffer obesity
- Two times more likely to drop out of high school

Family Life Skills Classes

Family Life Skills classes are offered to the entire family to assist with everyday needs. Each participant will have an interview with a field educator to discuss concerns and an individual plan will be tailored to fit their needs. Participants will receive a certificate of attendance after completing 10 hours of Family Life Skills classes. The five components of Family Life Skills classes are: Effective Parenting, Healthy Relationships, Conflict Resolution, Soft Skills, and Life Skills.



Impacting the **WHOLE** Family

Over the past 20 years, Families First for Mississippi has successfully served the state of Mississippi by providing services to meet the vast needs of Mississippians that span over generations and cross demographic, cultural and economic backgrounds. We strive to support the family system to create successful employees, provide academic and social opportunities for all Mississippi students, and provide stability for families to flourish successfully across the state of Mississippi.

Services are delivered jointly by two community organizations: The Mississippi Community Education Center (MCEC) and Families First for Mississippi. The unified efforts of both organizations strengthen families of all backgrounds and life circumstances by providing support and services - from parenting classes, educational opportunities, positive youth development, literacy assistance, and workforce and job readiness. Families First for Mississippi offers these services through seminars, workshops, classes and presentations held in schools, community centers, churches, and state agency offices. Families First for Mississippi works diligently to positively impact lives and create hopeful futures for all Mississippians.

The whole family concept involves all ages as well as utilizes partnerships with state of Mississippi agencies and community organizations to fill any gaps and eliminate any duplications between services. Families First for Mississippi's core services stimulate employment through job readiness, support family financial stability, promote literacy, increase graduation

rates, support positive youth development, and promote parenting skills development. In an effort to provide students assistance who are at risk of not graduating, Families First for Mississippi offers courses in a flexible and hassle-free environment as an option to earn a high school diploma. Our courses prepare students for postsecondary institutions, military, and employment opportunities.

As Families First for Mississippi expands on Governor Phil Bryant's Healthy Teens for a Better Mississippi initiative, we look with optimism to a future of hope for the next generation of Mississippi's leaders by nurturing today's teens and students. Teen suicides, pregnancy, cyberbullying, and addictions are all part of the reality of this generation of Mississippi's youth. As a call to action to equip and empower Mississippi's teens to make healthy choices and overcome adversity, Families First for Mississippi along with Governor Phil Bryant's office, Mississippi State Department of Health, and Mississippi Department of Human Services host annual Healthy Teens Rallies in Mississippi. Together we work with the mission to be a community of loyal supporters that will tirelessly work to create a path for a bright and promising future for all Mississippi's youth.

Co-Executive Director of Families First for Mississippi, Dr. Nancy New, explains:

"Our main goal for Families First for Mississippi is to impact the entire family by offering direct services and connecting the dots between all of the Mississippi family programs."

It is crucial to join together the existing services to help accomplish the mission and purpose of Families First for Mississippi. MCEC and Families First for Mississippi are reaching out to other providers such as community colleges, higher education, non-profits, state agencies, churches, schools, businesses, and other leaders in the community in order to bridge the gap.

Common Lifelines:

- Church Members
- Neighbors
- Friends
- Coaches
- Mechanics
- Bankers
- Co-workers
- Repair Persons
- Pastors
- Teachers
- Resource Centers

Make sure you and your family back at home have discussed these types of questions:

- When are bills due each month? How do I pay them?
- Who do I call when my child is sick or cannot attend school/daycare?
- If our primary family vehicle breaks down, who can I call for help? And how can I get to work?
- If the air conditioning/heating at home breaks, who do I call?
- Who is a contact for advice on budgeting?
- Who is the contact at my child's daycare or school if he/she needs help with homework?

Common Community Resources:

Mississippi Access to Care	(844) 822-4622
Entergy Utility Assistance	(800) 368-3749
MS Dept. of Mental Health	(877) 210-8513
MS Dept. of Medicaid	(800) 421-2408
MS Dept. of Human Services	(601) 359-4500



LIFE ON THE ROAD...

About KLLM:

For 50 years, KLLM has been transporting perishable commodities for satisfied customers throughout the country. KLLM offers Over-The-Road, Regional and Dedicated temperature-controlled services throughout the United States and Mexico. KLLM was the first nationwide, temperature-controlled carrier to utilize satellite communications fleet wide. All KLLM trucks, as well as all lease trucks, are linked to our Jackson, Mississippi, headquarters through a satellite communications network. This system allows for monitoring the status and location of every KLLM truck on the road at any given time. It also provides for a two-way communication link between drivers and terminal personnel. This system has allowed us to enhance our service to our customers, our drivers and the entire KLLM system.



Driving is a rewarding career. The most successful drivers and their families have a plan in place for challenges they may encounter at home or while away at work. Families First for Mississippi is committed to assisting KLLM's employees and families in their time of need.



WWW.MSCEC.ORG



WWW.FAMILIESFIRSTFORMS.ORG





Stay supportive.



While you are away at work, your family back at home may have challenges to keep a household running smoothly. Stay supportive and remember to express appreciation for the work being done at home while you are working. You and your family must work together as a team to be successful. Try to regularly express your gratitude for those family members back home who may be doing extra, from school work with teenagers, to working while taking care of young children, to doing all the cleaning and housework, alone. Make sure you thank them for their work, as they are appreciative of the great work you are doing, as well.



Stay fueled.

The quality of the food that you eat contributes directly to your ability to stay alert, energized and healthy. Plan ahead by bringing healthy snacks and foods that are convenient to eat while at work, such as fruit, nuts and protein bars. Over-consumption of fast foods can lead to swelling, high-blood pressure and increased risk of heart-related issues.



Stay sharp.

Driving requires alertness, focus, and attention to detail. Your success depends on your awareness. During work breaks, take a few minutes to relax and clear your mind. Try not to look on your phone and just spend a few moments being quiet, which will help improve your focus.

Stay prepared.

Driving is a financially rewarding career. However, there are expenses that you and your family should plan for in advance. The following questions should be considered:



- How much is needed for rent or your mortgage?
- How much will it cost to travel to and from work?
- How much is needed for food each month?
- How much does my family's education/school cost each month?
- How much is needed for utilities at my home?
- How much for medical insurance?
- How much should be in savings for emergencies?
- How much can be saved for holidays, birthdays or special occasions?
- How can I keep track of my family's expenses?

There are many great and free budgeting apps for smartphones and printables online. Try utilizing an app or printable budget, so you and your family can know in advance how much you will need for expenses each month.

Community Support

Families First for Mississippi is committed to assisting KLLM and their employees' families in any way possible. Families First for Mississippi has resources readily available for a variety of circumstances and unplanned challenges that you or your family may experience. Contact our local Families First Resource Center for assistance at 601-366-6405 (Mississippi Community Education Center Main Office). Also, visit our website for more information, www.FamiliesFirstForMS.org

Life can have many challenges and it is important to have a plan in place for medical emergencies and other problems that may arise unexpectedly. Refer to the list on the back page to compile your own set of contacts, for you and your family, that may be needed during unplanned challenges.

Impacting the **WHOLE** Family



LITERACY

"The inability to read has lasting effects on families and individuals from childhood through adulthood."

Families First for Mississippi provides resources to promote high-quality early childhood education and youth literacy. In addition, we provide evidence-based programs for adult literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.

Families First for Mississippi literacy programs provide evidence-based remedial reading skills and training for children and adults, individualized curriculum pathways, and skill development in the key areas of literacy:

- ♦ Phonics and phonemic awareness
- ♦ Vocabulary development
- ♦ Reading fluency, including oral reading skills
- ♦ Reading comprehension strategies
- ♦ Writing



Dr. Nancy New, Co-Executive Director
of Families First for Mississippi



Families First for Mississippi hosts center-based programs throughout the state that provide parents and childcare professionals with tools to promote literacy instruction.

These programs include:

- *Seminars and training for early childhood professionals on the Mississippi Early Learning Standards and Guidelines*
- *Technology-based literacy instruction for adults and literacy assessments*
- *Book drives and supporting literacy campaigns in schools and childcare centers*
- *Early Childhood Academy Coaches and Resource and Referral Associates that support childcare centers*
- *Lending libraries at each center location for parents and childcare providers*
- *Training for parents on literacy strategies to use at home with children*

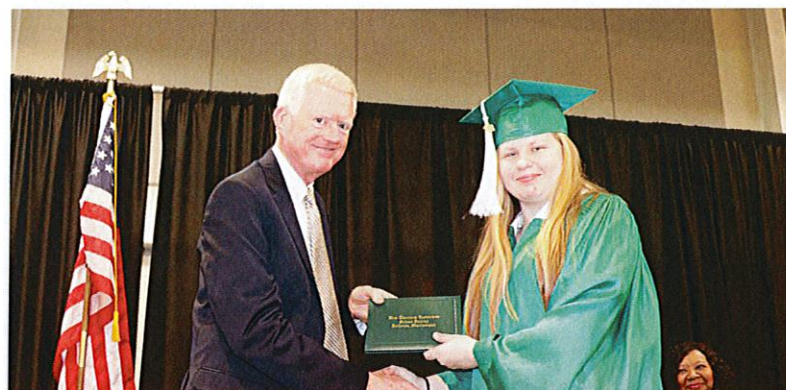
"Building a strong foundation in literacy is the core of success for students and adults. Families First for Mississippi has placed a strategic emphasis on building literacy programs to reach the whole family. Families First for Mississippi believes it is critical to address literacy issues in Mississippi, so that families can be successful."

-Dr. Nancy New, Co-Executive Director
for Families First for Mississippi

A service provided by Mississippi Community Education Center



FamiliesFirstForMS.org



Program Contacts

Barbie Duckworth
Education and Diploma Statewide Director
(601) 366-6405 ext. 255
bduckworth@mscec.org

Roy Balentine
Education Coordinator
(601) 366-6405 ext. 207
rbalentine@mscec.org



Mike Scott
Education Coordinator
(662) 844-0013
mscott@frcnms.org



FAMILIES FIRST ONLINE HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA PROGRAM



WWW.FAMILIESFIRSTFORMS.ORG

School District Partnerships

For school-age persons, the program requires a partnership between Families First and a public school in Mississippi, with each entity mutually benefiting from the partnership and committing to help prevent high school dropouts. Primarily, the partnership strives to assist students in graduating from the local public school by first enrolling students of senior classification in Families First for Mississippi's remediation and test prep online courses. Secondary to the goal of drop-out prevention, the program assists students that have exhausted all options in the pursuit of obtaining a high school diploma. This assistance allows students at the end of their senior year to enroll in an alternative high school diploma program to pursue an accredited diploma. Overall, this helps students enter the workforce and earn gainful employment.

Center-Based Participants

For those 19 years of age and older who did not obtain a diploma while in high school, Families First for Mississippi offers an opportunity to earn a high school diploma in an online environment. Contact your local Families First Resource Center for more information. www.familiesfirstforms.org

The accredited high school diploma obtained upon completing the Families First for Mississippi High School Diploma Program is issued by New Summit School through its distance learning division, New Learning Resources Online (NLRO).

New Learning Resources School District is accredited by the Mississippi Department of Education and AdvancED: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

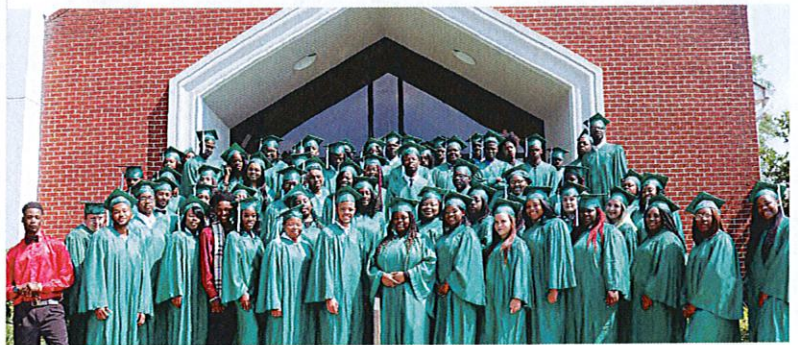


Graduation Requirements

The Families First High School Diploma Program offers a 22-credit pathway for a standard high school diploma. This graduation option allows students to transfer accredited courses and take remaining courses as approved and prescribed by New Learning Resources Online (NLRO).

**All participants who enroll through a school district must have met the local school's requirements for state tests in Algebra 1, English II, Biology I, and U.S. History. If these requirements have not been met, school district participants must take each respective course with NLRO.*

**All participants must take a minimum of 5 credits with NLRO to earn a diploma.*



Impacting the **WHOLE** Family



PARENTING

"Parenting is one of the hardest things you'll ever do, but also the most rewarding."

Families First for Mississippi is dedicated to impacting the whole family, while meeting the specific needs of individual family members. We offer an array of parenting and life skills classes throughout Mississippi.

Parenting classes include:

- Parenting
- Life skills
- Anger management
- Family unit conflict
- Financial literacy

CLASSES ARE FREE OF CHARGE



Dr. Nancy New, Co-Executive Director of
Families First for Mississippi

Families First for Mississippi has partnered with the Mississippi Department of Human Services (DHS) to develop the Non-Custodial Fatherhood Program. Approximately half of all children will live in a single-parent household at some point during childhood. Unfortunately, a common pattern is for non-custodial parents to become increasingly detached over time. The Non-Custodial Fatherhood Program is designed to facilitate a sense of responsibility to their child. The program achieves this by offering the following classes:

Non-Custodial Fatherhood classes include:

- Effective parenting
- Healthy relationships
- Conflict resolution
- Soft skills
- Life skills

In addition to offering parenting classes, Families First for Mississippi offers positive life skills topics for success in the workplace and home life.

Life skills topics include:

- Creating a household budget
- Balancing a checkbook
- Managing credit cards and credit
- Savings account and savings
- Paying bills
- Loans (including the dangers of payday loans or title loans)
- Communication skills
- Health and nutrition

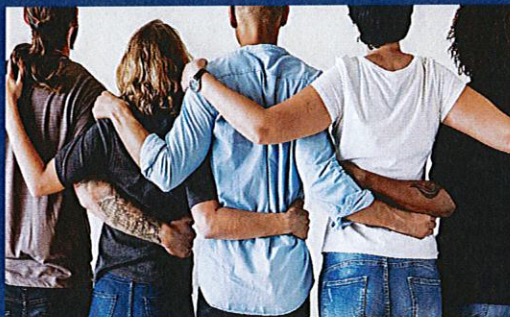
A service provided by Mississippi Community Education Center

FamiliesFirstForMS.org



Common Lifelines:

- Neighbors
- Church Members
- Friends
- Coaches
- Bankers
- Co-Workers
- Pastors
- Teachers
- Families First Resource Centers



Common Community Resources:

Mississippi Community Education Center | Families First for Mississippi (601) 366-6405
(Fatherhood/Parenting/Life Skills Classes, Resume & Job Readiness Assistance, High School Diploma or GED)

Recovery Consultations, Inc. (601) 982-5943
John Owen, CEAP, CAS,
Addiction Education Director
(Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services)

MS Dept. of Public Safety (601) 987-1212
(Driver's License)

Entergy Utility Assistance (800) 368-3749
(Electricity Bill Assistance)

MS Dept. of Mental Health (877) 210-8513
(Mental Health, Alcohol, Drug Addiction Services)

MS Division of Medicaid (800) 421-2408
(Provides Access to Health Coverage)

MS Dept. of Human Services (601) 359-4500
(Child Support, Workforce Development & Economic Assistance)

MS State Dept. of Health (601) 576-7400
(Birth Records, Birth and Death Certificates, Vaccinations)

THE NEXT STEP

New beginnings simply start by taking the next, correct step. Families First for Mississippi is here to walk alongside you as you begin a healthy and refreshed journey. We can connect you with resources for housing, employment, educational opportunities and efforts for reconciliation with your loved ones. On this journey ahead, know that you are not alone. Families First for Mississippi is here every step of the way to provide access to resources for second chances and new beginnings.



WWW.MSCEC.ORG



WWW.FAMILIESFIRSTFORMS.ORG



The Next Step Begins with Your Education

To receive the best possible job opportunity, receiving a high school diploma can provide new opportunities for career choices. At Families First for Mississippi, we can help you obtain an accredited high school diploma in a flexible environment. In addition to taking classes remotely from a computer, Families First for Mississippi has resource centers located throughout the state of Mississippi, where you can complete required courses in computer labs free of charge. For more information, call 601-366-6405 or visit www.familiesfirstforms.org.

Accredited diploma-issuing institution

Credits as required by The Mississippi Department of Education

Online academic courses

Self-paced learning environment

A diploma can be obtained upon completing a

High School Diploma Program issued by New Summit School through its distance learning division. New Learning Resources

School District (NLRSD) is accredited by the Mississippi Department of Education and AdvancED: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).



The Next Step Begins with Your Resume

The job application process is often overwhelming. Families First for Mississippi wants to help you become successful by connecting you with new and existing employment opportunities. We provide resume and job search assistance, interviewing skills, professional clothes closets, and career planning.



The Next Step Begins with Your Personal Development

Your past doesn't have to define your future. At Families First for Mississippi, we believe everyone deserves a second chance to reach their full potential. Each day provides an opportunity to begin anew. You will begin to develop healthy habits for your positive character development and growth. Families First for Mississippi offers classes that are free-of-charge to help parents develop healthy habits from effective co-parenting, father's rights and responsibilities, the realities of child support, and creating and sticking to a budget.



The Next Step Begins with Your Recovery

Your personal story may be filled with chapters of sorrow and loss. Sometimes in those times of hopelessness, you may have turned to alcohol or drugs or been overwhelmed with depression. Your life can begin to be rebuilt through emotional and physical recovery and spiritual support. Through offering Adult Addiction Education Program free of charge, Families First for Mississippi offers resources to begin the process of healing and recovery for those suffering with addiction.



Community Support

Families First for Mississippi is here to connect those suffering from addiction to the adequate services they need to help support addiction recovery. For more information on Families First for Mississippi Adult Addiction Education & Recovery Program, visit www.familiesfirstforms.org/adult-addiction-recovery or call 601-982-5943.

Impacting the **WHOLE** Family



WORKFORCE & JOB READINESS

"Workforce training and job readiness provides career pathways that match your strengths and interests."

Families First for Mississippi offers employment classes, job fairs, resources, and workshops on many topics to help employees and their families have a successful work-life balance. This **FREE SERVICE** allows participants the ability to achieve economic security and self-sufficiency.

Families First provides answers to the following questions:

- What job(s) exist that are geared towards my education, skills, and experience?
- What job openings are available?
- What is the pay and how do I apply?



Dr. Nancy New, Co-Executive Director
of Families First for Mississippi



"Managing Life with Work"

The job application process is often overwhelming. Families First for Mississippi wants to help you become successful by connecting with new and existing employment opportunities in entry level positions.

Families First programs will provide the following for pre-employment:

- Individualized career assessment that evaluates core workplace skills and interests
- Relevant information for potential job openings
- Referrals for those who lack a high school diploma
- Career pathways that match their strengths and interests
- Resume building, job search, application, interviewing, professional clothes closets, and career planning

Families First programs for post-employment geared towards:

- Parenting
- Conflict resolution
- Stress management
- Time management
- Professional behavior
- Managing your paycheck
- Saving for your future
- Handling life's demands
- Setting goals & priorities
- Literacy education

A service provided by Mississippi Community Education Center

COMPLETE² COMPETE

One Degree Better

Helping Mississippi Adults
Complete Their Degrees

Vita Michel Tillman
Jackson State University 2019

ACHIEVING PERSONAL GOALS



"I sat out for about 10 years. The C2C program helped me to get my college degree... and I got a job offer yesterday."

- Krystal Epps-Austin
Jackson State University, 2019

\$22K

**Salary
increase**

average with a
bachelor's degree*



\$11K

Average salary increase
with an associate degree*

*Source: Bureau of Labor

CHANGING LIVES



"My C2C Coach made getting my degree easier than I imagined. She showed me exactly what I needed, and helped motivate me to finish."

- Beci Teasley
Co-Lin Community College, 2018

471

**Associate
degrees**

issued through C2C*



15K+

Mississippi adults with
enough credits for an
associate degree

*As of 6/2019

BECOMING ONE DEGREE BETTER



"You are not left on your own through the C2C program. There's always someone that will help you."

- Traver S. Jung,
Mississippi State University, 2019

695

**Bachelor's
degrees**

issued through C2C*



1.8K+

Mississippi adults with
enough credits for a
bachelor's degree

*As of 6/2019

PROVIDING A BRIGHT FUTURE



"If you have an unfinished degree, I would definitely recommend the C2C program. It was very easy, very painless."

- Barry Pittman
University of Southern Mississippi, 2019

694

**Enrolled
Students
currently***



2,038

Total Mississippi adults
that have enrolled through
the C2C program*

*As of 6/2019

See how close you are at www.MSC2C.org.

John Davis

502 Charles Street
Brookhaven, MS 39601
john.davis@mdhs.ms.gov

Education

University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD)

University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Master of Business Administration (MBA)

Belhaven University, Jackson, Mississippi
Master of Science in Leadership (MSL)

University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Bachelor of Science (BS)

Experience

1992-Present

Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS)

Executive Director – January 2016

Appointed to the position of Executive Director by Governor Phil Bryant and Confirmed by the Mississippi Senate. The organization has an annual budget in excess of \$3 Billion with 4200 employees serving 1 out of every 4 adults and 1 out of every 3 children in the State of Mississippi with offices in all 82 counties.

Deputy Administrator for Programs

Appointed to the position of Deputy Administrator of the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) after serving as the Director of the MDHS Division of Economic Assistance (DEA).

Office Director, Division of Economic Assistance (DEA)

State Welfare Director: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP formerly Food Stamp Program), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and TANF Work Program.

Worked on the local, regional and state level. Appointed by Governor Kirk Fordice as the Director of the Lincoln County Department of Human Services (1998) until appointment (2005) to the position of Director of State Operations for DEA.

State Operations Director, DEA

County Director, Lincoln County Department of Human Services

Projects Officer IV, State Policy MDHS

Program Specialist, State Trainer MDHS

Social Worker

BOARDS: State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) Executive Board
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
U.S. Interstate Commission for Juveniles
State Longitudinal Data Studies (SLDS) Executive Board
State Supreme Court Families First Initiative
Policy Academy for State Strategies

2013 – Present Belhaven University, Jackson Mississippi
Adjunct Professor – Graduate and Undergraduate courses taught:
BSM325/Lecture/20
BSM380/Lecture/0512
MPA607/Lecture/11
MSL658/Lecture/009
MSL630/Lecture/10
MBA624/Lecture/741

Accomplishments Recognized nationally with *the Award for Accuracy and Stewardship in the Food Stamp Program*.

Ranked 3rd in the nation and 1st in the Southeast Region for payment accuracy in the Food Stamp Program.

Received \$1,986,833 bonus payment from FNS for payment accuracy in the Food Stamp Program.

Received the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Award of Excellence for the administration of the Food Stamp Program.

Received the *Quality Control Star Award* from USDA, FNS in recognition of the proactive commitment to public trust by developing an efficient quality control system for measuring the accuracy of Food Stamp performance.

Received the *FNS Excellence Through Technology Award* in recognition of efforts to move forward with technological advancements that surpass most of the states in the Southeastern Region.

Received a Food Stamp Participation Grant in the amount of \$443,005.28 for system enhancements that will provide better customer service.

Recognized by FNS as one of eight states in the nation with the most improved

program access index in the Food Stamp Program and awarded \$1,396,703.

Coordinated the Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan's Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF6), Mass Care, with 283 *state shelters* opened as a result of Hurricane Katrina which served 17,800 *individuals*.

Coordinated the Disaster Food Stamp Program after Hurricane Katrina in 23 federally declared disaster counties certifying 521,679 individuals representing 186,765 households with food stamp benefits totaling \$110,836,512.

Received the FNS Humanitarian and Disaster Preparedness Response Awards for the extraordinary example of personal commitment and sacrifice for the greater good of all Mississippi citizens.

Coordinated efforts to increase the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Work Program Participation Rate from 19.30% in 2004 to 66.95% in 2007.

Received \$4,982,778 TANF High Performance Bonus awards from the Administration of Children and Families (ACF).

Coordinated the development of the Mississippi Healthy Marriage Initiative to collaborate with community organizations, educational institutions and faith-based groups to provide the appropriate skills based relationship education and services to youth and unmarried couples.

Coordinated efforts to present the "Just Wait" Abstinence message to more than 37,000 Mississippi children.

Received the 2008 Director's Cup Award from the Food and Nutrition Service Southeast Region for excellence in program administration.

Coordinated in FY2007 the collection of over \$4.8 million in over-issuance dollars, achieving the highest percentage of monies collected for established claims in the Food and Nutrition Services Southeast Region.

Coordinated the Mississippi Abstinence Summit that included over 5,000 youths, community and faith based leaders who participated in the day-long event at the Mississippi Coliseum, featuring the Lt. Governor, State Officials and nationally recognized speakers focusing on Abstinence.

Coordinated efforts that resulted in Mississippi completing FY2007 with a payment accuracy rate of 97.34% well above the national average and receiving \$1.6 million for being in the top four states in the nation.

Coordinated effort that resulted in Mississippi completing FY2007 with a state reported participation rate of 66.95% which was above the national requirement of 50%.

Appointed by Governor Haley Barbour to the Policy Academy on State Strategies: Workforce Policies to Address Worker and Employer Needs.

Appointed by Governor Phil Bryant to the State Workforce Investment Board.

Coordinated efforts to outsource Child Support Enforcement in seventeen Southwest Mississippi Counties followed by Statewide privatization. This effort will lead to better county operations and is projected to save in excess of 1 million dollars per year in administrative costs.

Lead the creation of the national pilot program that will prevent Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) fraud/double dipping with the National Accuracy Clearinghouse (NAC) by creating multi-state data sharing models. If used by states nationwide with an estimated savings of 193.4 million nationwide by reducing dual participation.

Created a Workforce Development division to assist TANF and SNAP recipients find gainful employment. Developed partnerships with Community Colleges, Department of Employment Security, and Department of Education to align agency resources to create pathways that do not duplicate services but instead maximizes resources available thus moving individuals to self-sufficiency in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

Developed a higher quality early childhood system that will meet the educational and developmental needs of Mississippi's children by moving to a family based unified and integrated early childhood system that maximizes resources and measures student outcomes to make sure children enter school ready to learn.

Strengthened partnerships with Family First Resource Centers to enhance direct services and collaboration between all MS family programs to impact the whole family while meeting specific needs of individual family members as we help them reach self-sufficiency.

Implemented the ABAWDS (Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents) Work Program- SNAP dependence has been reduced by approximately 100,000 recipients since the announcement that MDHS would not seek the ABAWD waiver. There has been estimated \$180 million in SNAP savings after the first 18 months of implementation.

Created a division of Internal Audit to elevate the transparency with all policies and procedures thus ensuring integrity and protecting the public trust of MDHS.

Reduced the dependence on State General Funds by more than 30% and continues to find efficiencies by consolidated divisions and programs within the agency.

Have joined the 2 Gen (Gen +) approach for delivering services which helps the Family as a whole instead of individually. The program serves hundreds of thousands of Mississippians in their quest for self-reliance being orchestrated by the dedicated staff and partners of MDHS agency in each of the 82 counties throughout the state.

Recipient of the Edward Dalstrom Distinguished Service Award.

Successfully completed eight mission trips to Central and South America with the Baptist Medical and Dental Mission.

Sixth generation member of Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church.