



From The Corner Office – Home – A Very Nice Word

Webster’s Dictionary defines the word Respite as a noun indicating “a short period of rest or relief from something difficult or stressful”. And who among us is not in need of occasional respite in order to restore mind, heal body and re-new spirit. When work began this past summer to renovate a neighborhood house that was purchased by the agency more than a decade ago, we knew that we wanted this to be a space where our children in out-of-home care could gather, relax and have fun. As construction continued we began to realize that this house could offer more than a place to hang out. In fact we could see that the house, porch and yard could be a place for much needed solitude, contemplation and emotional restoration for both children and adults. This house, we all came to believe, could in fact become a home away from home.

We are pleased to announce the opening of LCYDC’s Respite House on Spring Drive. Our children have already started enjoying the new space - preparing and enjoying home cooked meals, playing board games, reading, rocking or just relaxing. Our Respite House is also equipped with a Clothing Closet filled with a selection of new clothing items thanks to the generosity of Mr. Rashaan Evans’ Razaar Foundation. We can’t wait to welcome guests to visit us at this wonderful new home.

On last month it was our great pleasure to thank our employees for their work and service at our company during the Annual Holiday Brunch. During this gathering we recognized the following fifteen employee anniversaries: Three Years – Jessica North, Argentina Harris, Phaedra Winston, Dakota Colon, Tavarius McNeil, Marcus Johnson and Mary Williams. Five Years – Mitzi Rogers, Laura Griffin, Jermain Holloway, Kyle Cooper, April Williams and Raymond Succar. Ten Years: Krista Collins and Patrick Judkins. We so appreciate these “stick-and-stay” employees.

This year we re-introduced the Cecil D. Moreman Award after a four-year hiatus. Our Senior Medical Technician, Mr. Raymond Succar certainly lives up to the ideals of our venerable agency co-founder, Mrs. Cecil Moreman – he strives for excellence in all that he does, displays continual compassion and high regard for persons served and routinely goes well beyond the confines of his job description to be of help and service to others. Congratulations and thank you to our agency’s 2019 Moreman Award recipient, Mr. Succar.

And so here at LCYDC we now embark upon this New Year and this new decade with a renewed spirit of hope and a fervent quest to continue to learn, grow, adapt and evolve as individuals and as a company. The possibilities for renewal and restoration encompassed in our new Respite Home space is a marvelous way to start. And – although it may sound hokey – we completely agree with author Laura Ingalls Wilder “home is the nicest word there is”.

Laura Cooper, Executive Director



BLESSINGS TO...

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 12-4 Mary Todd
- 12-7 Shantia Holcey
- 12-23 Mitzi Rogers
- 12-29 Amy Tatum

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1-11 Bradford Ford
- 1-12 Tiffany Moore
- 1-13 Temeria Martin
- 1-14 Tamarcus Milner
- 1-26 Chantal Umetesi
- 1-29 Johnathan Baker

NEW HIRES

- Autesia Williams - Intern
- Savannah Kelley - Intern
- Alexis Kontos - Intern
- Claire Roberts - Intern
- Kaitlin Smith - Intern
- Emily Williams - Intern
- Sydney Sain - Intern
- Sarah Waldrum - Intern

To view our WEBSITE,
log on at
www.lcydc.org



CENTER SCENES...

SERVICE EXCELLENCE RECOGNIZED

The Lee County Youth Development Center located in Opelika is a multifaceted human services agency founded by two remarkable women with servant's hearts – the late Mrs. Jane Walker and Mrs. Cecil Moreman. LCYDC recognizes individuals who perpetuate the vision and capture the spirit of these founders and continually work to serve causes greater than themselves.

Mr. Raymond Succar has been employed by the company for five years and serves as the agency's Senior Medical Technician. "Mr. Succar continually goes beyond the confines of his job description to provide excellent medical attention and exceptional compassion and kindness to the clients we serve" according to Executive Director, Laura Cooper. "In addition, Mr. Succar lends a helping hand to colleagues whenever and wherever needed. The term – that's not my job – is nowhere in his vocabulary".

Mr. Succar was recently awarded the Cecil D. Moreman Award for Service Excellence and received a standing ovation from children, peers and colleagues who were in the audience. According to Cooper "Mr. Succar exemplifies the ideals of our founders in his daily quest to serve others with excellence – he is most deserving of this distinguished award which bears the name of one of our venerable founders.". For more about the Youth Development Center visit their website www.lcydc.org



DESTINATION REACCREDITATION

Our thanks to our LCYDC Council on Accreditation Self-study leaders, Dr. Chenavis Evans, Ms. Phaedra Winston, and Mr. Aubrey Lewis. We urge agency and community-wide support of this important work as we prepare for a spring in depth on-site peer review team audit of our programming, our services and our governance. LCYDC was first COA accredited in 2004. Over the past sixteen years we have continued to work in ways that affirm all that this national accreditation designation stands for. We look forward to the submission of our exhaustive self-study document and welcoming the peer review team in the coming months. With your support, we reach our 2020 reaccreditation destination.

MOREHOUSE/SPELLMAN CODING CAMP

The nationally recognized Culturally Relevant Computing Lab (CRCL) investigates, researches and presents problems centered on creating innovative computing technologies and techniques to solve cultural problems and issues. It is the largest producer of African American computer science and engineering undergraduates in the nation who go on to pursue doctoral programs.

It focuses on broadening active participation in computer science through "culturally relevant and human-centered computing" experiences. With that said, Lee County Youth Development Center's staff and clients were very excited to welcome Morehouse and Spellman students to our campus as they presented our very first "Coding Camp." For 3 full days, our students and staff learned programming techniques, competed with miniature robots and even designed our very own visual displays. It was a memorable experience that greatly impacted the youth at our agency. Many thanks to The Razarar Foundation, Microsoft and Critical Insights for their incredible support.



SPECIAL THANKS TO COMPOUND SOLUTIONS

CSI, a company out of California that distributes patented nutraceutical ingredients that positively impacts the health and performance of individuals, elected to support the college's O Grows program, housed in the Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology. CSI has a deep commitment to nutrition and connecting people to the earth, which aligns well with the O Grows mission of service to others. O Grows of Opelika carries out these functions through its work with students in the alternative school and its community market. O Grows and CSI have partnered with Lee County Youth Development



Center to install a community garden located behind our Respite Home. With the aid of several of our clients, this vision has become a reality.

CSI also provided new shoes and Christmas gifts to these clients to thank them for their hard work. This kind gesture from Kimberly Sickinger, the President of Compound Solution goes to show that "service

is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on this earth." Thanks again CSI! Your gifts are very much appreciated.



BISCUITS AND BUSINESS

Lee County Youth Development Center would like to thank all those who participated in the 2020 enrollment event on November 8, 2019. Benefits offered to LCYDC full-time staff include: health and dental insurance, vision insurance, gym memberships, short term disability insurance, life insurance, flexible spending accounts and free secondary insurance. If you should have any questions regarding your current benefits please contact Employment Services.



APPRECIATION AND THANKS

The holidays ushered in so many gifts that we were bursting at the seams with the generosity and kindness of others. Thank you to **Trinity Lutheran Church** of Auburn for the donation of Linus Blankets for our children. Thank you to the **Shannon Family Foundation** and **Coach and Mrs. Frank Tolbert** for generous cash donations. **The Yoga Group of Auburn** blew us away with gifts of all kinds for our children in residential Care. Regional Managers from the **Home Depot Corporation** donated amazing, fantastic gifts for our children to enjoy. **Compound Solutions, Inc.** donated dozens of new shoes and amazing board games for our children to enjoy. And Finally to Jamie Sergen and the **Lee County Association of Realtors** – Wow! The hundreds of practical and needed items and the gloriously impractical gifts of toys, bikes, dolls, games, etc. will continue to ease burdens and make spirits bright throughout the year, thank you. Our sincere appreciation and gratitude to all – Happy New Year!

