

GIVING NOTICE

Mike McElhinney

After many months of deliberation, prayer and several conversations with my wife Jeanette, I have decided to announce my retirement as President and CEO of Michael Dunn Center and Michael Dunn Foundation, effective June 30, 2019. I am hopeful that a one year notice will be ample time for a smooth transition.

While I am looking forward to retirement, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve as the president of such a tremendous organization, working with hundreds of fantastic people, and I will miss everyone. I suspect folks have sometimes grown tired of hearing me say this, but Michael Dunn Center is truly the best place I have ever worked. I say this because the employees demonstrate every day the belief that I share in our mission. I say this because the management team and the board of directors have been very supportive of me. And I say this because the children and adults, their families and conservators, have been wonderful to work with for the past 12 plus years.

Jeanette and I plan to live in Roane County the rest of our lives. We have lived in many parts of the country and briefly overseas. We have visited 49 states and several foreign countries. There is no place we would rather live than Roane County, Tennessee. Not only is it a beautiful place, but so are the people. The friends we have made and the people we have met here are second to none.

I want to thank Jim Henry for first contacting me in the summer of 2005 about the open position at Michael Dunn and for the very generous amount of time he has spent mentoring and guiding me during my tenure here.

I want to extend my appreciation to Ken Yager for his spirited advocacy on behalf of children and adults in Roane County and across the state. And I would like to thank Jim Pinkerton and Bill Fowler, our two most recent Center board chairmen, for really upgrading and professionalizing our board of directors, as well as for supporting me.

I look forward very much to changing roles from being the president/boss to being a friend of many employees, board members and people we support. Thank you all very, very much for your patience, kindness, loyalty, openness, and dedication. Michael Dunn Center will always be foremost in my thoughts and prayers.

THEM CHANGES.... KEEP ON COMING. AGAIN

Roger Richmond

So often over the years of this publication, I find myself addressing change. In fact, in our first newsletter of this year, my lead article was "Them Changes... keep on coming", addressing the grand opening of our new community clinic.

Fortunately, we haven't had to experience a change as significant as turnover in our agency president/executive director but a few times in the history of Michael Dunn Center. Mike McElhinney has been with us since December 5, 2005. Prior to that, Kyle Hauth was Executive Director for 14 years, and Eileen Harris for 15 years before him.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our best source of new employees has always been our current employees.

Michael Dunn Center offers referral bonuses to employees who send us good applicants that are hired and stay with us.

The referring employee receives \$250 at 6 months and \$250 at 1 year.

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Eileen carried us through our beginning “mom and pop business” years, establishing 10-person group homes and sheltered employment and building our name as a top provider agency. Kyle moved us into the “corporation” level of business, adding community based supported employment, three-person (and one-person) supported living homes, and community based day services, alongside our traditional facility based services. Mike restructured senior management, computerized us with an agency-wide database for documentation, and brought us to become the dedicated Person Centered Organization we are today. We’ve become community based to the extent that one will seldom see supported individuals on this campus.

Much has changed in the years since our grassroots beginnings. In recent years, we’ve had to deal with major changes in state oversight and regulations from DIDD and TennCare and now other forms of managed care oversight. We will continue to grow and improve, often in spite of changes handed down from the state and federal government. Restrictive regulations can be challenging and difficult to manage, but we’ve always done the best with what we are handed and generally turn our lemons into lemonade.

Each era has made us better. We will continue to change and grow into the future. Having long-term stability in leadership has always been a strength for this agency. Change is not necessarily always welcomed, but in the end things work out well and often make us a better organization. The future has always held new and exciting avenues for Michael Dunn Center.

A Search Committee has been working diligently to identify and interview candidates and ultimately select a person to fill Mike’s position. This person will likely put his or her own stamp on our organization and carry Michael Dunn Center into the next chapter of our history.

More future articles in this newsletter will most certainly address changes and new directions. We’re already exploring providing individualized services utilizing Enabling Technology, which in many ways brings us full circle back to what I’ve always called “true” supported living- one person living on their own with supports, only now with technology to help provide safe and secure services to individuals who may prefer to live alone.

The future is ours to make. Continue to do the great work you always do and help us provide the best possible services for people.

ROSA’S LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Tonya Watts, Director of ResHab

Rosa has always showed an extreme interest in learning how to read and write. Beginning July 1, 2018, she began attending a literacy class with the Roane County Friends of Literacy at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, in Midtown, TN.

When the class first began, Rosa was struggling greatly with understanding the alphabet and the alphabet song. The Roane County Friends of Literacy instructors have worked extremely hard with Rosa. She is now understanding the alphabet song and slowly learning how to read “sight” words.

Anytime Rosa is in class, you can see how eager she is to learn. She is currently learning the process of sounding words and letters out before guessing at the word. Rosa has come a long way from the very first class. She practices with everyone at home, as well as in class. She looks forward to the classes because she’s doing something she enjoys.

When shopping, Rosa always looks for new books and paper that can be helpful to her with in this learning process. Her alphabet has gone from only knowing A-D to knowing A-J and P-Z. She can now look at words like mat, pat, sat, mad and know the words- before taking classes, she could not.

We all look forward to the success and growth that this class has to offer Rosa. She is a very special person and we all feel she will continue to grow from this point forward! We would like to thank Roane County Friends of Literacy for all of their hard work and dedication to Rosa as she continues the path of learning!



Each Quarter, one deserving employee is selected from nominations that are submitted by peers and supervisors to receive our Walk The Talk Award. The award is presented to an employee who "walks the talk" and exemplifies MDC's stated Values.

The fact that it is always very difficult to select only one recipient from our many deserving employees is an indicator of the quality of our staff and the significance of receiving this award. Recipients receive a \$100 gift card, a framed certificate, and recognition in the main lobby and in this newsletter.

KATHY REICHARD WALKS THE TALK!

Kathy is dedicated to providing excellent service to our customers and the individuals we support. She is a compassionate person, is kind, honest, hardworking, and self-motivated, and she always puts individuals' care and safety before anything else. When you first meet her, she seems very quiet, but after you get to know her, her kindness and compassion is easily seen.



Kathy is reliable, takes her job responsibilities seriously, and is professional at all times. Her supervisor received a phone call from the recycling coordinator at ORNL expressing their appreciation for her hard work providing recycling at their facility. She stated Kathy is a pleasure to work with and is always polite and willing to assist.

Kathy gets along with everyone; she is diverse, flexible, and self-motivated. She takes initiative no matter what the situation and handles changes in her schedule with no complaints.

Kathy works well with every person in Work Programs as well as with other departments. She leads by example, enjoys working with individuals we support and with co-workers, and always represents Michael Dunn Center in a positive manner.

She's a strong team player and gets along well with her peers. Not only does Kathy do a good job performing assignments, but she also takes the time to train individuals we support on new jobs and does a great job training new staff. The training she provides is thorough and she takes great pride in training both staff and people we support.

Kathy is always willing to work overtime in Work Programs and other departments. She does not have to be asked— when she sees the need, she just steps up. She is very good at offering suggestions to her co-workers to help them better their work process. She follows through with assignments, follows instructions from her supervisor, and does an excellent job with any task she is assigned.

Kathy does an amazing job supporting those we serve and representing Michael Dunn Center!! We are fortunate to have her and she is an outstanding recipient of the Walk the Talk Award!

Congratulations and thank you, Kathy!

VOLUNTEER SPIRIT IN DAY HAB

Dee Ann Lindsay, Vice President, Day Services

The Day Hab department is teaming up with Rockwood Ministerial Association, Mid-East Community Action Agency, Second Harvest Food Bank and New Midway Baptist Church to provide boxes of food to those in need.

Several individuals from Day Hab volunteered to help unload prepared boxes of food from the Second Harvest truck and load it onto a van for delivery. Members of New Midway Baptist Church then delivered the boxes to local families. The boxes of food included non-perishable foods such as canned goods, cereal, boxed meals, and powdered milk. Some perishable foods, including pre-prepared meals and fruit, was included as well. CVS donated heating pads for the elderly to use.

This ministry will be ongoing and will occur every third Tuesday of the month. As we continue to volunteer and learn more, our role in this work will increase. In September, we helped with unloading the truck and loading the vans again. In October, we will begin sorting and packaging foods to place in the boxes, then load them for delivery. This mission will be ongoing throughout the year, depending on funding. Applications can be submitted through Mid-East Community Action Agency. Food boxes are available to senior citizens in Roane County.

Other volunteer work includes assisting Mid-East with the preparation of meal boxes for Meals on Wheels at our main campus on Gallaher Road, where Mid-East rents space. We will expand this volunteer work by assembling menu packets that will be placed in the meals at the beginning of each month.

We work with Alpha Bitz Thrift Store to sort and hang clothes. Alpha Bitz is a ministry that helps women dealing with addiction get their feet on the ground and get headed in the right direction. We also take newspapers to the animal shelters for use in the animal pens. We are proud to give back to the community that has so generously given back to MDC over the years.

If anyone has suggestions for additional volunteer work, we would love to talk to you! Please contact Sally Cromwell or Dee Ann Lindsay at 376-3416.

TRYPHENA STONE

Denise Willer, Director of Health Services



Welcome to Tryphena Stone as the new Assistant Director of Health Services- Therapy.

Tryphena has worked at Michael Dunn Center as a Medical Appointment Coordinator for over a year.

She has lived in East Tennessee since 2011, but is originally from California. Her hobbies include cooking and motorcycles.

Tryphena said she grew up going to work with her grandmother, who was a teacher for children with developmental disabilities, and that experience drew her to MDC last year.

When asked why she is excited about her new position at MDC, she said, "I'm excited about the new challenge of this area of Michael Dunn because I will get to see individuals from here and from outside agencies progress and be able to do more things physically that they were struggling to do when they first came to the Therapy Department."

FIGHTING LIKE A CHAMP!

Stacy Suttles, Assistance Director, ICF

The ICF Department would like to give big congratulations to Janelle Ward for fighting like a champ and beating cancer!!!!

Janelle is such an inspiration. She worked during her treatments, missing very few days. She would often work the day after receiving treatments. She was often seen smiling and kept a very positive attitude throughout the ordeal.

She has truly become our HERO!!!!





Boats



Good times!



Friends



Couples

Scenes from summer's end!



Food!



Cooks

The annual MDC Picnic Roane County Park 9-21-18



FUN!

PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES WORKSHOP

Tiffany Whittenbarger, Director of Quality Assurance

Twelve people participated in a 4-day Personal Outcome Measures (POM) Workshop. Eight of the twelve were Michael Dunn staff- Holly Becker, Kat Vallies, Andrea Kelsay, Mary Ann Rymer, Teresa Pistole, Tonya Watts, Christine Lawson, and myself.

It was eye opening! As an agency, we have continued to strive to be a Person-Centered Organization, and we've come a long way from where we were 5 years ago. We've always been told that we do a great job at keeping people safe, but we needed to work on supporting people and their rights, so that's what we've been focusing on. It hasn't gone unnoticed- significant progress has been made.

Staff who participated in the workshop had to interview two people supported and their supporting staff to gather information for the twenty-one (21) below indicators:

My Human Security

- People are safe
- People are free from abuse and neglect
- People have the best possible health
- People experience continuity and security
- People exercise their rights
- People are treated fairly
- People are respected

My Community

- People use their environments
- People live in integrated environments
- People interact with other members of the community
- People participate in the life of their community

My Relationships

- People are connected to natural support networks
- People have friends
- People have intimate relationships
- People decide when to share personal information
- People perform different social roles

My Choices

- People choose where and with whom they live
- People choose where they work
- People choose services

My Goals

- People choose personal goals
- People realize personal goals

Through those interviews, we learned that we still have a long way to go. The workshop helped us open our mind to all of the possibilities that are out there for the people we support, just as we do for ourselves. We also learned about the "3 E's" (Expose, Educate & Experience).

We need to stop speaking *for* the person and deciding what *we* think they want in life. We should start having more conversations *with* them and start empowering *the person* to speak up about what they want in life. The training is about continuous improvement so that we can improve our person-centered services and supports and personal quality of life for the people we support.

I have to say, I was putting this training off for years because I just thought, "here we go again". Something that we're already been doing, so why in the world do I need another training. I really could kick myself for not taking the workshop years ago. I've always thought I was the biggest advocate for people's rights, but I learned that there is still a long way to go. I felt empowered and excited to start implementing the things that I learned and can't wait to see people grow even more!!

It was like a revival- it reminded me why I work at Michael Dunn Center and got my fire started, again!

Must see videos-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wT9PdS9hPFs>

https://youtu.be/bFMx1_gcxD0



MY POM EXPERIENCE

Mary Ann Rymer, Assistant Director/Work Programs

"How do you know?" This was a common question of the CQL trainers, Sandy Honeycutt and Shalita Wells, at the Personal Outcome Measures training I had the pleasure of attending August 14-17.

When my Director, Cindy Gregg, told me I would be attending this four day training, my first thought was, "Puh-lease, another training?" But let me tell you, it certainly was an eye opener.

Our class of twelve learned how to do an interview of people supported to assure that their personal outcome measures suited their life goals, not the goals of staff or family members. We tend to use double language when referring to the people we support. We don't refer to ourselves the way we refer to people that receive services.

During the four-day training, five factors were considered in the learning process:

1. My Human Security: Non-negotiable human and civil rights.
2. My Community: Access to be in, a part of, and included in the community.
3. My Relationships: Social support, familiarity, intimacy, and belonging.
4. My Choices: Decisions about one's life and community.
5. My Goals: Dreams and aspirations for the future.

Within these five factors are 21 indicators to assure a personal quality of life for those that receive services. Personal outcomes are person centered. During the interview process, we spoke to people we support and have worked with for many years. I was confident after the interview that my teammate, Teresa Pistole, and I had a successful interview session with our assigned person.



L-R: Sandy Honeycutt, Shalita Wells, Mary Ann Rymer

We went to his home to meet with him one afternoon. We asked him questions pertaining to each of the 5 factors and 21 indicators. Our second person we interviewed was a little more challenging due to communicating without words. We wrote down his answers, returning to POM training the next morning, confident of the progress we had made on our assignment.

Each of our classmates was paired up as well with people to interview. The focus was on information gathering, not on passing judgment on the information. The emphasis was on each person as an individual.



Top L-R: Shalita Wells, Mary Ann Rymer, Tonya Watts, Holly Becker, Kat Vallies, Sandy Honeycutt, Andrea Kelsay;
Middle: Patrick McDonald Christine Lawson, Teresa Pistole, Tiffany Whittenbarger, Tyrone Holland
Bottom: Stephanie Hawkins, Carissa Davis

With both interviews complete, Teresa and I were prepared, or so we thought. Our instructors, Sandy and Shalita, were more prepared. When we gave responses pertaining to the information we had gathered, their response was, "How do you know?"

It was a common response that we need to ask ourselves when we are establishing personal goals and outcomes for people receiving services. Do they have the independence in setting their own goals? Are they visiting family members as often as they desire? Do they get to spend money on things they want? Are they attending the church they want to attend and not just being taken to a staff member's church?

How do you know? Did you ask them? Remembering it is about them and not about staff or family members is important! People have the right to make their own decisions. It is our responsibility to integrate them so they are aware of their options.

So, when planning outcomes, always ask yourself, "How do you know?"



Now You Know



Back issues of Now You Know can be found at
www.michaeldunncenter.org

Phone Numbers:

Poison Control.....1-800-222-1222
Abuse Investigator....1-800-579-0023
MDC Engineering On Call....(865) 335-0549
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)..... (866) 219-1232

KUDOS AND CONGRATULATIONS!

- * Donald Monson graduated from the LPN program.
- * Christa Gilreath had a baby girl!
- * Jessica Moudy got married!
- * Sherry Gile was promoted from DSP to MAC (Medical Appointment Coordinator).
- * Sharon Cross was promoted from DSP to ICF Active Treatment Mentor.
- * Jessie Miles and his wife, Brittany, had their first baby!
- * Jennifer Irwin was promoted from DSP to Team Leader.
- * Jennifer Irwin also had a baby boy!
- * Kobie Mast got married!
- * Amanda Hawkins got married!
- * Tryphena Stone was promoted to Assistant Director of Health Services.

Mission

Empowering individuals living with disabilities and challenges to gain independence

Vision

We strive to be a premier agency providing the highest quality of person-centered services with an emphasis on positive communication, while inspiring people to open their minds to acceptance and inclusion.

Values

We value a person-centered culture by promoting:

• High Ethical Standards

Compassion

We value honesty and openness, and treat people with dignity, compassion and mutual respect

Integrity

We have a positive reputation in the community and maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, ethical behavior and personal responsibility

Diversity

We value the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual and respect the diversity of opinions, backgrounds and cultures of others

• High Quality of Services

Professional Commitment

We maintain a disciplined, results-oriented organization reflecting the highest professional standards and ethical behavior

Teamwork

We strive to develop positive working relationships based on trust and respect as we work together to achieve our common goals

Responsiveness

We believe that our future is based on our current actions and decisions. Remaining open to change will define how we manage the challenges that come our way.