

FIRST WORD

Michaele Butler

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edited by
Roger Richmond

As I write this article, it's been 65 days since I became President/CEO of Michael Dunn Center. I can honestly say this; I have loved every minute of it. I have enjoyed every interaction, every meeting, every email and every problem. This is because I am a part of the relationships, the actions, the replies and the solutions. I am thankful to be here at Michael Dunn Center. It has never mattered to me what seat I'm sitting in or what title is behind my name. I get to be part of something that makes a difference and changes lives and that has changed mine.

I read a book recommended by the search committee when I accepted this position titled, "The First 90 Days" by Michael Watkins. The opening paragraph will give you a jolt. "The President of the United States gets 100 days to prove himself. You get 90." Regardless of your political preference, (which is not what this sentence is about), businesses around the country see "90 days" as your make or break point. The people who have been elected to run the country for the last several decades got 10 extra days to convince people that they were the person for the job.

This is just another reason I have so much respect for new employees. This is a big place. It is a big job! Not only are you tasked with 55 hours of class/computer learning, you are getting to KNOW all of the people you support. This isn't just what someone's favorite food is. It is, "John has a dining plan. All foods must be cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ " sized pieces or he is at risk for choking". This is serious stuff. This is scary stuff. Thank you for being here and we will work with you so you feel comfortable and can do the best job you can for the people we serve. After all, you may have come to MDC for the opportunity, but I hope you'll stay for the possibilities.

Whether you are in your first few weeks or months or have been at MDC for years, you are the reason we are successful day by day. Yes, we must plan for the future, but we get there one day at a time. Don't ever feel that you aren't making a difference. You are. We're thankful. Keep up the great work and let us know what you need to be successful (I heard that thought in your head just now....."more money"). While more money is always on the forefront of our decisions, unfortunately budgets are too. Knowledge and planning is key to maintaining the mission we started fulfilling nearly 50 years ago.

I will say this, there is no limit to where you can go with this agency. Remember the opportunities versus the possibilities. They are here!

Since I have 25 days left in my "First 90 Days", I will say this. I have changed nothing about the way I interact or answer or problem solve. The difference is that I get to do much, much more of it on a daily basis. I have the knowledge, the ability and the heart for this job, but my passion for this mission fuels it all.

You have my respect, my dedication and my promise that I will always do my best for you. This means every person supported, staff person, board member, family member, conservator, guardian, provider, and state and federal governing body. Thank you for what you do, so places like MDC can make a difference. Thank you for allowing me to be part of it.

Sincerely,
Michaele

DID YOU KNOW?

"Hauth" House was named in honor of past MDC Executive Director, Kyle Hauth.

The correct pronunciation of his name, and of "Hauth" House, is "Hout", which rhymes with "out".

(Kyle would tell you, though, that it rhymes with "clout".)

Inside this issue:

DSP Week 2-3
Sept. 8-14

Hooray for DSPs! 4

Walk the Talk Awards 5-7

ResHab Happenings 8-9

Making it Work 10

NATIONAL DSP RECOGNITION WEEK, SEPTEMBER 8-14

Roger Richmond

SOME OF THE BEST DSPS IN THE FIELD WORK AT MICHAEL DUNN CENTER

DSP week was originated to recognize the incredible and important work of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) across the country. We are proud to give a shout-out to the many outstanding DSPs we have at Michael Dunn Center. In our opinion, some of the best DSPs in the field work at Michael Dunn! We very much appreciate their hard work and dedication to making the supports we provide be as excellent as they are!

With respect to our DSPs, Michael Butler stated, "We couldn't do this without you! It's true! You are the heartbeat of our organization and without your hands and hearts, we couldn't serve those who need us most. Today and every day, we celebrate you. Thank you for being here and for making us better every day!"

Direct Support Professionals are arguably among the most overly needed yet historically undervalued individuals in the health and human services field. Although we've made some progress increasing wages over the past year, in large part due to the diligent efforts of Senator Ken Yager, wages for DSPs are still not what they need to be. The value of their hard work and dedication has never been reflected by funding for wages across the country.

One great thing about DSPs is that most of them, as is true of most people working in this field, don't do what they do for the money. They do it because they care. In the years when I used to do classroom training for employees, one of the first things I said to new employees was if you're just here for a paycheck, you're probably in the wrong job. It takes heart, compassion, caring, and commitment to do all the things that are required of DSPs.

Working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Direct Support Professionals often deal with stressful situations, challenging behaviors, and long hours. Yet, despite the challenges, being a Direct Support Professional can be one of the most rewarding professions you'll ever have and we appreciate the people that have chosen to serve as DSPs at Michael Dunn Center. We salute the DSPs and offer our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for their dedication and devotion to the people we support!

"To our wonderful DSPs:

As a parent and board member, I want to tell you how much your dedication, energy and love for the people we serve is appreciated. We know you aren't working for the hourly pay, because we unfortunately cannot pay you your worth; but just know that we know what you do and how hard and important your job is. We thank you for keeping on keeping on!"

Harriett Westmoreland, Michael Dunn's mother, Board Member Emeritus

"I am very proud of all the direct support professionals, because it takes special people with a servant's heart to perform your duties!"

Roane County Sheriff Jack Stockton, MDC Board Member

"I wanted to send out a thank you to all of our awesome Direct Support Professionals! You are a key part of our team and most important to the people we support! We are all lucky to have you all! This week is for you! You are appreciated!"

Tonya Watts, Director, MDC ResHab

We should always be expressing our appreciation for each and every DSP, but especially during DSP week.

We are so thankful for each of you. You are doing an amazing job! You work long hours, in a demanding job, providing services for the people we support all while taking away time from your own families. This is a field with low retention and high turnover, but you all shoulder on for the benefit of our mission and the people we support.

As a DSP, I know that you put your own life on pause while you make a huge difference in the lives of those we support. This doesn't go unnoticed. What you all do matters more than you realize.

I am thankful that I am able to work with each and every one of you. It seems like no words are adequate to explain how much we all appreciate you. Please know that what you do does not go unnoticed.

Even if the person you are caring for can't say "thank you", know that you are appreciated. You are valued. We couldn't do this job without you.

I hope everyone had an awesome DSP week!!!!

Jacklyn Newport, Director of ICF Services

I just wanted to give a big shout out to all our DSP's!!!! You ALL are awesome and I appreciate all you do. I am, and always will be, a DSP to all the people we support. It is very humbling experience! Teamwork is key to success, so thanks to all of you for being a great asset to the MDC family!!

Mary Ann Rymer, Assistant Director of Work Programs

You chose not to place '**DIS**' in 'ability', that is why you are AWESOME Direct Support Professionals. DSP's are problems solvers, multi-taskers, team players, friends, listeners, advocates, and so much more. You give it your all on a daily basis to better the lives of the people you support. Having the ability to give to others, there is no greater gift.

Having the privilege to work with many of you is amazing, I see daily the creativeness, diversity, and loyalty you have for the individual's you support. Keep up the GREAT WORK and know you are appreciated, not only by MDC but, most importantly, by those you support.

Mary Bowman states, "My staff are wonderful, they help me do the things I want to do, they are my friends, we laugh, we go places, they care about me. THEY ARE AWESOME!!!"

Thank you all for all that you do! Michael Dunn Center could not do it without you!!

Cindy Gregg, Director of Work Programs

Happy DSP Week to all of you! All of your hard work and dedication makes such a tremendous difference in the lives of the people supported at MDC. It is always so impressive to see how well individuals do when they are with their favorite DSP's!

It is also great to see how happy all of you are when you are providing great care. Your attentiveness not only helps those you support to be happy, but to be healthy as well. Having you by their side for support decreases their stress because they know they can depend on you! Thank you for being that person they can depend on!

I hope all of you had a wonderful DSP week and know how much you appreciated throughout the year!

Denise Willer, RN, Director of Health Services

In recognition of DSP week, I want to thank you so much for all that you do. For those of you who know me, you know that I am a shy person of few words. I don't speak out often, but when I do, it is usually about something I'm passionate about. I am passionate about the work we do here at MDC and we absolutely cannot do it without you! Words cannot express how grateful I am for each and every one of you.

When I started at MDC, I started as a DSP at LaCroix, which at the time was known as Hope Haven 1. From the moment I walked in the door and met Ms. Mary Jane, I knew I found my calling and this is where I wanted be. Many of you have probably experienced the same feeling and will be with us for many, many years.

I have been blessed to know so many amazing co-workers over the years and I have learned so much from them. It is an honor and a privilege to be a part of the MDC family and we would not be here if we did not have our wonderful, dedicated and hard-working DSP's. Thank you again for all you do!

Dee Ann Lindsay, Vice President of Day Programs

HOORAY FOR DSPS!

Tiffany Whittenbarger
Director of Quality Assurance

I hope your DSP week- and every week with Michael Dunn Center, was filled with meaningful acts of recognition that communicate how much you all matter to all of us at MDC and how valued you are. I know at times you probably don't feel valued and maybe you sometimes feel like you just can't do anything right, but I want you to know that we truly do appreciate you.

I've been with MDC for 16 years. I started out as a DSP and worked in that role for 4 years. I had no idea how long it would last or even what in the world I was doing. However, It has been an extremely humbling experience that changed me!

I know from experience how hard your job is because I've been in your shoes. I understand the frustrations you feel, because I too had frustrations. I know how tired you are. I know how you want to say something to people in the community because they won't stop staring at you and the person you're supporting. I know how hard it is when you're away from your own family. I want you to know that I've been in your shoes and I know what you go through.

According to Wikipedia, Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are "people who work directly with people with physical disabilities and/or intellectual disabilities with the aim of assisting the individual to become integrated into his/her community or the least restrictive environment."

We know that you are much more: You are compassionate with your words and encouraging with your praise. You wake up often thinking about the person you support and how you can help them have a better day and a meaningful day, or you're thinking about why the person may be in pain and are they okay. You become a family. You go to work on your days off and often go home late. You miss out on your kids school program, family time, etc. You are diligent and patient. You advocate for the choices of others and walk along side of them as they achieve their goals. You eat cold sandwiches to be back in time to assist people in preparing their own hot meals. You're creative in your approach in teaching new skills. You are willing to take long walks, drink another cup of coffee, watch the same movie for the 100th time because those things bring joy to the person you support.

People don't tell you that it will be the most amazing job you've ever had, but it probably is! It can also be the most challenging and take an emotional toll on you. They don't tell you that you will love the person you provide support to for years and one day that person may pass away. That person was your family, as you were to them. You got trained on CPR and First-Aid, but no one told you how it feels if you ever had to use it. You're not told about the negative reactions you may face when you're out in the community. People can't explain to you the bond that you develop with people you support. I know what it's like to try to have a conversation with someone who doesn't communicate with words. After supporting someone for a while, you develop a bond so strong they can just give you a look and you know exactly what it means, what the person wants and what they're feeling. Most of the time, all it boils down to is the person wants to be heard, listened to and included, treated with respect, not to be treated differently, and to be loved.

As you're teaching someone life skills, that person is also teaching you. All of those stressful days you've had and you feel like giving up, then the person you're advocating for finally speaks up for themselves and/or overcomes an obstacle in their life reminds you what you're here for!

For you, this isn't just a job. It can be difficult at times, but it's so rewarding when you see the person that you're providing support gain independence, speak up for themselves, accomplish one of their goals, etc.

Know that every day, not just DSP week, that you are valued, supported and recognized for a job well done. We honor you and the tremendous difference you make each day the lives of the people we are committed to support.

From my deepest heart, I say, THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO EACH AND EVERY DAY!!

Walk the Talk Awards

As regular readers of this newsletter will know, some years ago we implemented a Walk the Talk Award to recognize excellent employees who truly set the example for others with their high standards of performance. The idea has been to hold up those people that truly live by the standards we set in our Vision Statement (see page 12).

Every quarter, we struggle with picking just one employee to honor, because we always have multiple nominees that are often equally worthy of recognition. A while back, our vote resulted in a straight-up tie and we decided to award both nominees. This time around, we had three nominees that we felt all deserved to be chosen. As we were trying to make a selection, Micheale Butler asked "Why don't we pick all three?" After discussion, we did just that and selected three nominees this quarter. We extend our appreciation and congratulations to each of them. Oh, and the award comes with a \$100 gift card!

Jonie Miller comes to work every day with the goal of embodying the MDC mission statement. She is very kind and hardworking and all the ladies at Rhonda Way lovingly refer to her as "Chef Jonie" for her abilities in the kitchen.

She is always ready to lend a hand and she is a very hard worker who works well with everyone. When she is at work, she always gives 110% every day. She is very well liked by her co-workers and by the people she serves, partly because she avoids drama and never participates in office gossip.

Jonie is very professional at all times and she always has a smile and a positive attitude towards her job, regardless of the situation. She thinks outside of the box. She offers creative solutions to problems and always has a "can-do" attitude towards work, instead of being negative. Jonie is a team player and she is always the first to jump in and tackle a trying situation or issue head-on with a calm demeanor and a "we can work through this together and solve this" attitude instead of an "it's not my job maybe somebody else will do it" attitude.

Jonie is always willing to go above and beyond for the ladies at Rhonda Way and for her co-workers.
-Carol Moore, House Manager

Some comments:

"Jonie has a very pleasant outgoing personality. She is easy to get to know and seems to have a strong desire to serve those she cares for. Jonie works hard and is always willing to pitch in and help when needed. She asks questions if she is not sure of something and assists the House Manager with ensuring plans are met to better serve those they are responsible for."

"Jonie is a team player and is very attentive to the people we support. She mostly works overnights but is more than willing to help out in a pinch. The ladies love Jonie and her cooking skills."

"Jonie is very caring and soft spoken. She knows the ladies of Rhonda way like the back of her own hand. She puts their wants and needs before all else. The ladies of Rhonda Way know they can count on her and this has built a relationship of trust."

Congratulations to Jonie for being a Walk the Talk Award recipient!! We're fortunate to have outstanding employees like her!



Walk the Talk Awards

Reese Suddith is very deserving of the **Walk the Talk Award**. He treats the men at Simmons with the utmost dignity and encourages them to make decisions for themselves and to believe in themselves. He includes them in all decisions about their home and life.

He supports the men fully to make connections in the community, while being invisible enough that the community is getting to know the men and not just "staff at Michael Dunn with their people". During the summer carnival at Rockwood, for example, Reese let Joe do the things he wanted to do and Reese stood in the background. When Joe needed or wanted him, Reese stepped in. He makes things fun and is very encouraging, giving the men a sense of ownership and self-worth.

Reese supports and encourages the men to stay engaged with their families and friends. He has a great rapport with the families. He's arranged for date nights with significant others and hanging out with friends.

He is deeply diverse and celebrates the worth of each person he meets. People love to work with Reese. He makes the shifts fun and enjoys his job. He is always willing to learn something or try something new. He is thoughtful and always helpful with any task or situation. The most important thing is the men at Simmons love Reese.

-Tonya Watts, Director of ResHab



Comments from others:

"Reese truly cares about the men at Simmons. He knows them well and they all look to him for guidance. He is an excellent co-worker who believes in teamwork. He exemplifies what person centered thinking is about. He is a great person who I enjoy working with."

"Reese sometimes works long hours, but his care of those he supports never wavers. He is always trying to find new creative things for them to do."

"Reese has an outstanding personality. He is easy to like and gets along with everyone he comes into contact with. He consistently goes above and beyond to ensure those he serves have the greatest quality life we can offer, keeping them involved in the community. Reese is truly one of a kind and I am honored to work with him."

"He is caring, respectful, and kind to the people he supports wherever he may be working. He is diplomatic and fair as a house manager and gets along well with all of his staff. He has high expectations, but he is relaxed in his approach to being a house manager. He is a leader, and when the other house managers have questions, he is readily available to assist them with the answers."

"Reese is a good person who has a lot of heart. It doesn't matter how his day has been prior to coming to work in the evening, he leaves it at the front door and moves on with his day. He always makes sure the guys are well taken care of to the best of his ability. He recently went on vacation for a week, and all the staff tried to do the best they could to do with what Reese does on a daily basis. When he got back, one of the individuals told Reese, "You can't go on any more vacations"! Thank you, Reese, for being who you are, and being such an asset to Simmons and Michael Dunn Center. We are so lucky to have you in the Residential Department!!"

"Reese is a good dude. The end."

Walk the Talk Awards

Will Hardin was also presented with the **Walk the Talk Award**.

Will has been an employee of MDC since September 9, 2018. In the relatively short time he's been with us, it would be hard to imagine Work Programs without Will. He is an example of caring, loving, and pride, always has something nice to say, loves life, is fun to be around, and brightens everyone's day.

Will's love and desire to help the individuals served to have independence in their lives shines through daily. He works as a fulltime shredding operator/DSP. The importance of serving people is a strong point in Will's life. His passions are easily seen, and what you see is what you honestly get.

Anyone that works with, or has ever worked with Will has a positive word to say about him. He is dedicated to the people we support, and goes above and beyond for our customers. Will leaves his best impression on people and those interactions reflect positively on Michael Dunn Center.

Will loves the work we do at MDC. He loves to work with and support the folks he serves and helps them to be productive and successful employees.

Will is compassionate, eager to be his best, and gives his all. Will's compassion for the individuals we support is amazing. He provides supports to the people he cares for and treats everyone as he would his own family.

Will always gives MDC and the people he serves his best and everyone always leaves smiling. He works overtime in the homes on a regular basis and is always willing to help. We are so thankful to have Will at Work Programs!

When he finishes his customer run, he always calls his co-worker to see if he needs help with his own run. Will is a team player for sure!

Comments:

"Responsive, WOW! Talking about responsive!!!! In October, 2018, Will was working with an individual in the community providing document destruction. He noticed something was just not right. J.L., the person Will works with almost daily was not acting the same, his sounds, expression, and movement were just not right. Will responded immediately. By knowing and caring about the person he was supporting, Will may have saved his life.

J.L. was experiencing a stroke. Will's quick responses, knowledge of the person, and concern for the person played a huge roll in saving his life. Will never lost his concern. He asked almost daily how J.L. was doing, could he go see him, and when will he be back.

Still to this day, Will and J.L. work together, and J.L. would not have it any other way, Will is his friend, his support, and someone that J.L. cares about!! Will volunteers to work extra hours at J.L.'s home, cooking meals, cleaning, and doing whatever is needed for J.L. and his housemates. J.L. does not want anyone else working with Will, they are buddies. As J.L. would say, 'I have to keep Will on track!'"

Congratulations, Will, on receiving a well-deserved recognition as a Walk the Talk Award recipient!



ResHab Happenings

Tonya Watts, Director of ResHab

Judy wanted to adopt a stray cat that has been hanging out at her home. His name is Bubba. We supported Judy in this decision and helped her learn about pet ownership.

Judy understands she must take Bubba to the vet, so he can remain healthy. She paid her pet deposit and has taken Bubba to the vet and bought him lots of toys. She also buys Bubba's food and treats. He is treated like family by all her other housemates too. Bubba is an indoor/outdoor cat.

Judy goes to the Co-op to buy those special collars to keep him safe from fleas and ticks. She is taking great care of Bubba and talks about him often. Judy is a responsible pet owner.

And Judy loves Bubba and Bubba loves Judy.



Judy and Bubba enjoying some time together.

VACATION TIME!



Jason (L) and Reggie (R)



Reggie (L) and Jason (R)

On July 19, Jason and Reggie went to Pigeon Forge to spend the weekend at Dollywood and Dolly Splash Country. They spent July 20 at Dollywood. They rode a carousel and a car ride before, unfortunately, lightning strikes forced all of the rides to be shut down.

Jason and Reggie did continue to look at the different shops and activities in Dollywood. They were both enjoying watching the video about the eagle conservation project happening at Dollywood. They also enjoyed seeing the different shops and restaurants and watching the hustle and bustle of The Island in Pigeon Forge.

On July 21, they went to Dolly Splash Country and enjoyed getting into the wave pool, until the waves started up! They went to the Lazy River, where Jason floated on an inner tube while Reggie walked the Lazy River with staff. They decided to have lunch at Golden Corral before heading home.

Jason and Reggie had a terrific vacation and both said they wanted to go back soon.

Rockwood Summer Carnival

The Rotary Club of Rockwood hosted the Rockwood Summer Carnival, July 29 through August 3. Michael Dunn Center was invited to have an informational booth for free!

After working with connections at the Rotary Club, we were also invited to enjoy the rides for free.

The folks at Rotary and the Carnival staff were amazing. They helped get people on and off the rides, slowed them down if needed and even rode some rides with them because they were asked to by the people we support.

It was a lot of hard work for those who were there helping the people we support, but the smiles were worth the work!



Art Show and Contest

The American Legions Women's Auxiliary Club, Shenanigans, Tractor Supply, and the Rotary Club of Rockwood sponsored an Art Contest during the Rockwood Summer Carnival.

The contest was judged by a former art teacher from Roane State Community College.

MDC had three winners! Mary B. took home a 1st place ribbon, Judy D. won a 2nd place ribbon, and Kathy B. won a 3rd place ribbon.

On August 19th, there was a reception for all the winners in all categories at the American Legion building in Rockwood.

The ladies were awarded their ribbons and prizes and enjoyed mingling with other artists from the area. Sam Maner, President of the Rockwood Rotary Club, made the presentations.



Judy receives her award from Sam Maner



Kathy receives her award from Sam Maner



Mary receives her award from Sam Maner

Making it Work!

Cindy Gregg, Director of Work Programs

Mary Ann Rymer, Assistant Director of Work Programs

We'd like to recognize and congratulate two of our workers, Buster and Jarvis. Both are long-time associates of Michael Dunn Center.

Jarvis was in the MDC school program for a few years and started working at Work Programs around 1998 or 1999, first working at PCA, then at Capstan. He has done a multitude of job tasks, but over the last six years or so, he was the work program supervisor. When work was facility-based, his duties were to keep all his peers assigned to a job task and keep up with the production per person.

Buster was our first Supported Employment placement, in the mid-1990's. He was placed at the Henry Center as Food Services Assistant, a position which he held until the center closed in 2015. Buster was well-loved and respected by everyone at the center, children, parents, and staff alike!



Buster (left) and Jarvis (right) lift machine parts from a packing container.

On April 8, Jarvis and Buster started working at the Volkswagen Plant, located in the Industrial Park off Interstate 40. When Volkswagen first came to Roane County, Work Programs assisted in setting up the plant for storing parts.

Since then, Volkswagen has called asking for our help, due to the outstanding work ethics of each person in Work Programs. Jarvis and Buster are two of the hardest workers we know. They both have proven themselves over and over. Currently, they are working Monday thru Friday, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Congratulations Jarvis and Buster! We are very impressed with you both and thankful to be a part of your work endeavors. Thank you for all that you do. We are all proud of you!



Jarvis doing his thing!



Jarvis (L) and Buster with a machine part

CAREFUL WITH THAT HACK, EUGENE!

Roger Richmond

"Security Alert. Your accounts was hacked by criminal group."

"Change your password immediately. Your account has been hacked"

If you pay attention to your phones and other electronic devices, it may seem as though you're seeing an increase in malware and phishing attempts. The very good reason for that is there has been an increase. Hackers and Phishers get results, so the practice is self-perpetuating and persistent.

I've emailed MDC personnel regularly with warnings, and can't emphasize enough the importance of being very, very wary and cautious of any contacts that "just don't seem right". Personally, if I receive a phone call and the number isn't in my address book, I will probably not answer it. If the caller is legit, they'll leave a message. Sometimes, even when they are not legitimate, they'll leave a message. (Apparently, my social security number has been "suspended"!)

A phone call currently making the rounds states that *"This call is from the Department of Social Security Administration. The reason you have received this phone call from our department is to inform you that we just suspend your Social Security number because we found some suspicious activity, so if you want to know more about it just press 1, thank you."* First of all, **Social Security does not suspend your social security number**. Secondly, misspellings and bad grammar are quick giveaways that a contact is a scam. Legitimate companies don't inform you "that we just suspend" your account!

Look very carefully at emails that you receive. Sometimes the wording just doesn't seem quite right, as in a message that reads, *"Subject: Are you on desk?"* How many people do you know that would ask if you are "on desk"? None?

That particular message has been going around for a while. According to the message, a person's "boss", correctly identified by name and appearing to be from the "boss's" email account, states, "I have a request I need you to handle but I am going into a meeting right away and can't talk for now. Send me your cell number and await my text message." Once the hacker gets the employee's phone number, a series of text messages instructs the employee to purchase a large number of gift cards with their personal credit card for which they will "later be reimbursed" and to send the redemption codes to him right away.

Google that one and you can find reports of individuals falling prey and losing large amounts of money. The messages seemed odd, but looked perfectly legitimate. Of course, they were not.

A phone call that appears to be from a legitimate source (Verizon, Paypal, your bank, etc.) indicates that "your account has been suspended, press one to speak to speak to an agent". Pressing one and following the callers instructions will result in compromising your personal information. This technique is called **phishing**, and it's a way hackers con you into providing your personal information or account data. Once your info is obtained, hackers create new user credentials or install malware into your system to steal sensitive data.

Fraudsters customize their attack emails with the target's name, position, company, work phone number, and other information in an attempt to trick the recipient into believing that they have a connection with the sender.

A recent message that has been mostly blocked by our spam filter reads (verbatim) as follows:

*"I have very bad news for you. I hacked your OS and got full access to your account. Btw, I came to know your sneaky secrets. I will not reveal you what I'm aware of, I've got the information along with me. To demonstrate my point, let me say to you that one of your passwords is (here is listed at least a close version of a password you may have actually used). Pay me \$5000 via *Bitcoin* to the address 1EJk2MtkFS-dr5e8xbsg7tqKTKjLGEKXX25pr in the next 43 hours. I want to make one important thing crystal clear, that I will destroy your life completely if I don't get the payment. In the event that I do get the payment, I'm going to erase each and every information I've with me, and i'll disappear for good . and you will do not hear anything from myself. This is actually the first and also last mail from me and also the offer can not be negotiated, therefore do not respond to this mail"*

The previous example is so obviously a scam, it shouldn't need mention, but, as stated earlier, these scams work. That's why they persist. If you didn't expect it and you're asked to click on a link, open an attachment, or press a number to speak with someone, reject it or delete it. You may want to follow-up directly with the individual or company that supposedly contacted you in a separate message or call/text to confirm. Keeping yourself safe from hackers and predators requires persistence and caution. You must be on alert for scams and hackers more so than ever before!

Now You Know

Phone Numbers:

Poison Control ... (800) 222-1222

Abuse Investigator ... (888) 633-1313

MDC Engineering On-Call ... (865) 335-0549

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) ... (866) 219-1232

Michael Dunn Center provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for every employee, full time and part time. EAP services are also available for any person living in the employee's household.

EAP provides short term counselling, with up to eight visits per issue per year, to help our employees and members of their households manage everyday needs and life events including:

- Emotional problems
- Stress
- Addiction and recovery
- Relationships and family issues
- Coping with serious illnesses and health concerns
- Sleeping difficulties
- Grief and loss
- Smoking cessation
- Child care and development
- Parenting issues
- Services and care for parents and elderly adults
- Pet care
- Financial concerns
- Estate planning
- Adoption, pregnancy, and infertility
- Retirement planning
- Consumer education
- Eating disorders and weight control
- Workplace problems and job stress
- Balancing work and personal life
- and more....

With EAP, you also have access to free 30-minute legal or financial consultations on issues such as real estate, retirement planning, divorce and separation, and budgeting and debt reconstruction. Further legal and financial services are discounted at 25%.

More information and useful tools are available on the Lifesync website. Contact EAP any time, any day, at (866) 219-1232.



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.