The Winter Issue 2025

Center Stage

A Bi-monthly newsletter for and about the people and programs of Lee County Youth Development Center



Seasons of Change

Seems that everywhere we look, lean and listen, there is change afoot. From our local, state and national governance to natural and manmade disasters and even within our own homes and businesses. And just like the seasons, change is absolutely necessary to Mother Earth's evolution and sustainability. However, there is little doubt that the barrage of disrupters to our daily status quo can leave one anxious and really unsettled.

Thankfully, our Winter/Spring edition of Center Stage is chockful of the many events and activities which have endured, season after season – year after year. We have enjoyed a fabulous trilogy of holidays with our children, families, stakeholders and our many benefactors. Starting with Thanksgiving, moving on to Christmas and wrapping up with New Years, there is not enough room to share all of the good news and warm memories made.

We were excited and honored to recognize our employee anniversaries including – 3 Years: Gregory Maddox, Steven Gaddis, Aldravius Reese, Belina Roby, Haley Threatt, Creola Richardson, Amy Lusane, Janat Clemendor and Katie West. 5 Years: Sundiata Fleming. 10 Years: Jermanine Holloway and Kyle Cooper.

And it is always a special treat to present our agency's highest award to a direct service professional who has consistently gone above and beyond to be of service to our mission and to those whom we have been called to serve. Named in honor of our ever faithful and indomitable co-founder, the late Mrs. Cecil Moreman – the recipient is selected based upon the purposeful, intentional passion consistently brought to the workplace, The 2024 Moreman Award recipient is Night Monitor, Dakeius B. Kindell. Mr. Kindell's work is critical to the safety of our children, staff, and guests during the crucial late night and early morning hours. His keen eye and detailed status reports help us to continually address gaps and deficits and improve our processes, buildings and grounds. Well done and congratulations Mr. Kindell.

Special thank-you's to our steadfast stakeholders and benevolent benefactors who continue to find ways and opportunities to continually bless our children and our agency. To name only a few – Lee County Association of Realtors, The Yoga Group, LaGrange, GA, Links, Inc., Greater Peace Baptist, Mt. Zion Baptist, Green Chapel Baptist, Trinity Presbyterian, Farmville, Baptist, Church of the Highlands, Youth for Christ, Worthy Squared and countless other groups, individuals and organizations. Thank you all for encouraging, uplifting and impacting us – we are in your debt.

And yes, the seasons and our world continually change. The people who keep us grounded – the rituals which keep us connected – the certainties of the past – the hopes and dreams for the future. These are the things which endure, season after season and year after year. LCYDC holds fast to these things.

-Laura J. Cooper

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"Prestwick Community Outreach was founded 5 years ago this year!"



PCO: A Handful of Promise

By: Ms. Cooper

There's something about the number five. One of the first things we do when babies are born is to count those five fingers and toes. This number typically marks the halfway point of reference. Can you believe that Prestwick Community Outreach was founded five years ago this year?

2020 was an uncertain year, to be sure. However, LCYDC was certain that our service model and growth goals could impact the Southwest Alabama areas of Washington, Clarke and Choctaw Counties. And now we are pleased to note that PCO has a whole handful of promise for the near and far future. Congratulations to our partner agency that is addressing food insecurity, foster care, fatherhood and parenting needs and a myriad of other service, programs and areas of impact. You guys look Fabulous and Five – journey forth!



LCYDC in the Local Community

By Ms. Cook

Worthy2 Warrior Team is a group of women from our community who are passionate about changing the lives of children. We are thankful to this amazing organization for embracing and pouring love into our children with their many acts of kindness over the past few months. Their warm, accepting and uplifting presence has been a blessing.

Worthy2 Warrior team has spent several Saturdays with our female residents - members play games, watch movies and participate in culinary arts making homemade meals from recipes. The goal of the Worth2 organization is to show these young women that they are valued, cherished, and capable of achieving great things. These visits are part of a larger mission and vision at Worth2. The organization advocates for those who have experienced sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. Through compassionate mentorship, the organization helps survivors reclaim their dignity and self-worth. The organization works to prevent the exploitation of young people through community education and awareness.

Thank you Worthy2 - together we are all stronger.





"Through compassionate mentorship, the organization helps survivors reclaim their dignity and self-worth"





Black History Month Art Exibit

By Ms. Foster & LCYDC Students

The Black History Art Exhibit, celebrating the United States Postal Service (USPS), focuses on the rich legacy of Black heritage through the creative lens of student artwork. The exhibit highlights the USPS's Black Heritage stamp series, which honors influential Black figures and pivotal moments in American history.

Students contributed by painting their own interpretations of Black Heritage stamps, while others decorated and personalized existing stamp designs, bringing a unique, modern twist to these historical symbols. This collaborative project not only showcases the artistic talents of young people but also deepens the understanding of Black history by connecting personal expression with the powerful narratives behind each stamp. The exhibit serves as both a celebration of Black culture and a reminder of the significant contributions of Black Americans to the nation's history.









New Hires: November - February

Brittany C. Edgar - PCO Administration Specialist, 12/2/2024
Amber A. Simpson - Residential Specialist I Passages, 12/15/2024
Synetra Simpson - Residential Specialist I Voyages, 12/29/2024
Jaketa L. Hutcherson - Residential Specialist I Voyages, 12/29/2024
Jakayla J. Billingsley - Residential Specialist Intake Detention, 12/29/2024
Elizabeth J. Daniels - Social Worker PCO, 1/5/2025
Christoper B. Jackson - Lead Teacher, Physical Education & Resources, 1/12/2025
Jasmine E. Yelder - Media Specialist, 1/26/2025
Maegan T. Edwards - Relief Residential Child Care, 1/26/2025
Brittany R. Boykin - Residential Specialist Weekend II Voyages, 2/9/2025
Prather L. Bickerstaff - Child Nutrition Aide CAF, 2/9/2025
Savonne Burroughs - Child Nutrition Aide CAF, 2/23/2025
Michael Burton - Teacher Substitute, 2/23/2025

February Birthdays

DeKera B. Fitzpatrick - February 4th
Jimmy L. Jackson - February 6th
Shawna M. Peagler - February 9th
Tavarius McNeil - February 12th
Jodie L. Powell - February 13th
Silvester Love - February 14th
Jessika T. Pollard - February 15th
Dakeius Kindell - February 23rd
Demarius D. Pitts - February 23rd
Sundiata Fleming - February 25th
Anthony T. Nelms - February 27th

