



January

- 1/1 New Year's Day
- 1/16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 1/16 Robert E. Lee's Birthday
- 1/20 Inauguration Day

January Birthdays

- 1/3 Sheena Burton
- 1/6 Ella Hubbert
- 1/11 Raymond Donaldson
- 1/16 Sheila Warnick
- 1/18 Dorothy Vance
- 1/19 Kay Baudier
- 1/27 Vonnesia Taylor

DDS Director Stone's New Year's Address

Happy New Year! I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays.

I want to personally thank each of you for your dedication to the people we serve and the tremendous efforts you put forth to ensure their wellbeing. I, along with Director Gillespie, share a deep appreciation for the work you do.

The demanding work we do focuses on caring for families. For this reason, the delicate balance of our professional and personal lives is essential. Spending time with our families provides rewards beyond measure.

In 2017 we will face wonderful opportunities as well as challenges. Your continued hard work and commitment will positively impact the future direction of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services. Together we will accomplish great things as we strive to become an agency stronger than ever before.

Looking forward to a great year!



Christmas Eve Candle-light Service at St. James Methodist Church



Brother, Damon, on Christmas Day in Iraq. He's leaning forward (3rd person on the right). Christmas just wasn't the same without him this year.



Griffin (4) and Mitchell (7) on Christmas morning



This is the DHS celebration for all of DHS. We have secured the following food trucks for this event: Southern Gourmasian, Kool's BBQ, and Loblolly. We'll have some awesome prizes as we celebrate each division's accomplishments, new goals, and learn about the services they provide. We are tying in the county offices and HDCs as well through Facebook live!

DDS Staff Resolutions

You have a fresh start.

Every.
Single.
Day.

- ◆ Work on my credit/ buying a house
- ◆ Walk in my calling/ Closer walk with God
- ◆ Complete my master's degree
- ◆ Complete my bachelor's degree
- ◆ Meet my size 10 goal
- ◆ Eat healthier
- ◆ Try and stay positive at all times
- ◆ Cook more
- ◆ Save more money
- ◆ Work on my attitude
- ◆ Learn how to budget
- ◆ Be a better listener
- ◆ Work on my finances
- ◆ Be physically fit and mentally awake
- ◆ Make better health choices
- ◆ Enjoy every moment
- ◆ Enjoy what you have
- ◆ Be healthy, keep it simple
- ◆ Survive this coming year literally & figuratively
- ◆ I don't want to acquire more things. I only want to acquire memories.
- ◆ Put an end date in 2017 to unfinished goals from 2016

DDS Executive Staff New Year's Address



Diane Keith– JHDC Interim Superintendent

The holidays have such a special way of bringing family and friends together. It is a time that we don't talk about disagreements or changes. The past is "in the past" and we focus on new beginnings and just being with the ones we care about. My family and I have had a great year, and for that I'm so grateful.



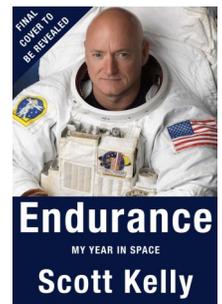
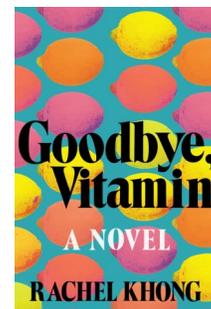
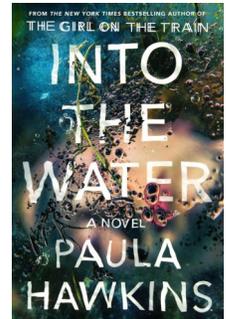
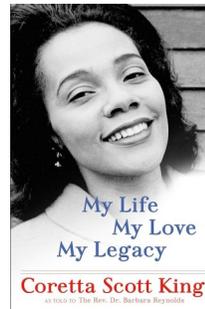
It is my prayer that the new year that follows is the best you have ever had. Make sure you tell your loved ones how precious they are to you. They can be gone in the blink of an eye. And try to find the positive in every situation. (Okay...now I'm just getting teary eyed.)

Hope you all have a Happy New Year!

Reader's Nook



Take some time to relax with a good book or two!





Meet
**Yvette
Swift**
DDS Program
Administrator,
12 Years of
Service

Bio: *I have 3 children, 17, 19, 22. I am the oldest of my mom's two living children. I came to DDS in the summer of 2004 and worked in various positions. I love what I do and bring a parental advocate perspective to the office every day. My son was diagnosed with a disability before the age of 2 and spent his early years with ARCHILD briefly before moving to Easter Seals. My children are my life's legacy and I am proud to be their mom. I look forward to the unique paths each will take! In my personal time, I tutor students and cater fulfilling two of my heart's passions!*

What would you like your DDS Family to know about you?

I consider it a blessing to have worked with many of you over the years, learning from you and growing. Whatever direction my next path takes, I will always have DDS in my heart! Nothing but love for you guys. Keep up the good work and keep up the fight for those we serve!

Best Life Advice: *Treat others the way you want to be treated. Take pride in your work. Whatever your job is, do it with excellence. Hold yourself to a higher standard than you hold others. To be a great leader, you must be a great server. If you do not have integrity, you have nothing. If you have integrity, you have everything!*



Comments, Suggestions, Q&A

Let us know what you'd like to see featured in upcoming editions. If you'd like to be a guest writer, let us know! Send all comments, suggestions, and Q&A to yvette.swift@dhs.arkansas.gov