



October

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Down Syndrome Awareness Month

National Spina Bifida Awareness Month

National Crime Prevention Month

National Physical Therapy Month

10/16 National Boss's Day

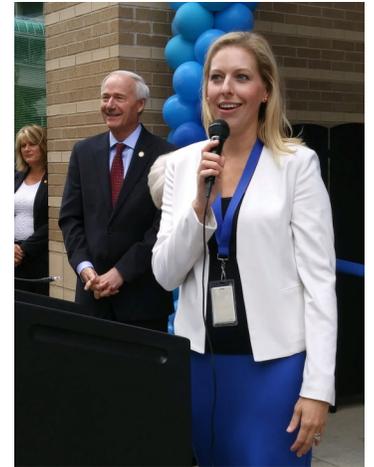
10/31 Halloween

10/31 DHS Children's Event

3rd Annual DDS Fall Food & Craft Fair featuring Unveiling of the DDS Store; The Blue Umbrella



Governor Asa Hutchinson and SAME staff



DDS Director Melissa Stone

October Birthdays

10/4 Janet Jones

10/5 Denise Brandenburg

10/7 Ruth Dunn

10/8 Lynn Davenport

10/16 Richard Johnson

10/18 Jewel Barnes

10/22 Avis Lane

10/25 Crystal Huffstetler

10/27 Jennifer Diehl

10/27 Linda Wilson

10/29 Shamia Rafter

10/30 Joe Winford

10/31 Jackie Williams



Governor Hutchinson



DHS Director Cindy Gillespie

DDS Fall Food & Craft Fair continued



Patricia White, Terrlyn Scoggins, Merinesa Morris, Laura Sherwood, Sheena Burton



Governor Hutchinson with DDS staff children



Linda Scales with her sister & daughter



Gretchen Baggett, Patricia White, Rose Lovato



April Nichols & son, Amanda Smith & daughter



Regina Davenport, Tammy Benbrook, Ellen Stewart, Portland Gilbert, Gretchen Baggett



Yvette Swift & Kiara Swift

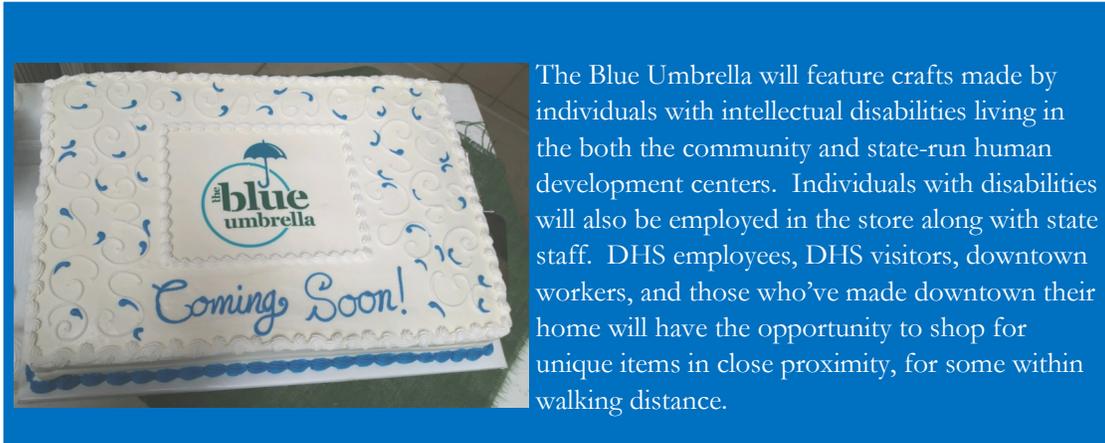


Jamal Williams, Keesha Lucas, Rhonda Stewart, Ellen Stewart



Karen McDaniel, Monique Freeman, Patricia White

The Blue Umbrella



The Blue Umbrella will feature crafts made by individuals with intellectual disabilities living in the both the community and state-run human development centers. Individuals with disabilities will also be employed in the store along with state staff. DHS employees, DHS visitors, downtown workers, and those who've made downtown their home will have the opportunity to shop for unique items in close proximity, for some within walking distance.

DDS Staff with New Employees



DDS Staff with Supported Employment workers and their job coaches. Two will be employed by the Blue Umbrella.

Sharon Mohammed, DDS Program Administrator, shares insight into **SAME**; State Agency Model Employer.

SAME seeks to establish a more diverse and inclusive workforce within state government. DDS is examining how we in government can expand our employment services by examining the application, recruitment, hiring practices, and other personnel policies- in efforts to remove barriers that prevents or stops individuals with disabilities from gaining employment within DHS. DDS will lead by example in making employment for Arkansans with disabilities a reality by becoming a State Agency Model Employer.

We are working in conjunction with our other state agency partners: Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Department of Workforce Services, Division of Behavior Health, Division of Aging, Division of Medical Services, Department of Education/Transition Unit, Division of Blind Services where DDS serves as lead. Other stakeholders include Arkansas Promise, and The Governor's Employment Taskforce.

This undertaking is part of a larger effort to promote greater inclusion within state and local government, thereby increasing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in both the private sector and the public realm.

DDS Fall Food & Craft Fair Food Trucks



Thank you to our food truck vendors who answer the call to support our events! Please share who was your favorite vendor and why? We'll pass that information on to them! This year we had: Count Porkula, Kool's BBQ, Loblolly, GQ Smokehouse, Pinches Tacos, Adobo To Go, Juicy-J Chicken & Fish, Haygood's Bar-B-Que, and JMG! Thank you all again for participating!



DDS Statewide Training held September 27th



DDS held its annual statewide training at the Holiday Inn Airport in Little Rock, Arkansas. Crystal Barker, of DHS Organizational Development and Training, presented on the DHS Mission and Adapting to Change. Rosemarie Lovato, DDS IT Manager, presented on Change Management. DDS Director Melissa Stone presented on Transformation, Reorganization, and Program Updates. Special thanks to Sabrena Harris, Patricia White, and Portland Gilbert for coordinating this training! Another win for Team DDS!



Arkadelphia HDC participates in the county fair parade

AHDC Superintendent, Kerry Gambill, shares, “Our clients had a blast! The theme was Pioneer Days to Modern Ways. We won 1st place in the adult division!”



DDS Football Tailgate held September 14th

Good Food! Good Friends!
Good Times!

Team building through a common love for football! From high school teams to college to the NFL, we all came together to kick-off the season. One thing we all can agree on...

We are a team that supports each other! Go Team DDS!!!



Meet: Gretchen Baggett

Gretchen has been with DDS since April however, she comes with 16 years of state government experience. She has 9 years with Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and 7 years with Department of Finance and Administration (DFA).

She is true Razorback fan...standing by her team against all odds.

She loves to travel especially cruising! She's traveled to Italy, Ireland, and all of the cruise places. She's a wealth of cruise knowledge. She has the answers. We may try to get her to do a cruise FAQ sheet for us!

She has been on a health journey taking better care of herself with a goal of 20 pounds to go.

Last but not least, Gretchen is happily married and has a 20 year old son.

Welcome to team DDS, Gretchen! We're glad to have you!



Comments, Suggestions, Q&A

It has been a pleasure creating this newsletter for three years for our DDS family. Please let me know what you would like to see featured. Please send all comments, suggestions, and Q&A to me at yvette.swift@dhs.arkansas.gov.