



A DDS Legend retires. Well Done!

August

Children's Eye Health and
Safety Month

Natural Immunization
Awareness Month



Rodney Farley retired on June 30, 2023. Rodney was hired in February 1995 as the first Title V Parent Consultant, and he continued in that role throughout his DHS 28-year career. His wife, daughter, and three grandchildren attended his surprise retirement celebration on June 29, 2023. Here are a few well wishes from his colleagues.

“So many proud moments over the span of 28 years! Nancy Church, our Title V Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Program Director, followed Association of Maternal and Child Health Program’s (AMCHP) recommendation to hire a parent as Title V Staff. You have served the children with special health care needs and their families well over the years. Among my fond memories are wheel chair basketball, a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) Respite Weekend event on the riverboat where I thought you were kidding about us singing a song together as entertainment (you weren’t), AMCHP Staff thinking that you were my boss and I was your assistant, the many walking tours that you led us on (see that building right there, it’s just a little past there) for miles and miles, sometimes in a snowstorm. You have made me laugh with tears so many times!



Iris Goacher with Rodney



Tracy Turner with Rodney

The legend cont'd

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to join others in wishing Rodney Farley well in his retirement. Rodney came to the Arkansas program for children and youth with special health needs as a very involved parent of a youth with special needs. He helped create his job description because there were no other examples of this job description in the state and few in the nation. New administrators have struggled with how to categorize his job or him as a person. He has represented our program (yes, I still call it our program) and the state of Arkansas in an exemplary manner on the state and national level. He held office in the Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP). People may not remember me or my predecessor or my successor but believe me they will remember Rodney Farley. He has won awards because of his representation of the families we serve. He has mentored scores of other parents during these 28 years. He has helped them learn to advocate for themselves and others in their states.

I send Rodney all my best wishes for his retirement. As I sit here at the neighborhood pool watching my husband and granddaughter playing, I pray that Rodney will also enjoy times like this with his family and friends! He's been a blessing to me, and our program and he deserves a wonderful time of rest!

Best Wishes my Friend!

Nancy Holder

Rodney- Congratulations on your retirement- what a career worth celebrating!

There is not a phase of my career that does not have you prominently in it- you have been such an outstanding advocate for families! I quickly learned from my beloved mentor, Eldon Schulz, that you were someone to partner with, someone who makes things happen, and connects with families. We did Project DOCC activities together for a while, and of course LEND-related stuff... but I don't know if you fully realized how hard I held onto your coattails, to learn the ropes of legislative and administrative advocacy once Eldon died. Within months of his death, I was expected to be present and active in Title V public forums and other activities- I felt like I was learning the ropes while also leading- I am so grateful for role models like you. I watched you and learned from you. You were such a natural- people are just drawn to you, and you leave such an impactful legacy. Thank you, Rodney!

Dr. Jill J. Fussell, MD



Assistant Director Regina Davenport with Rodney



Conway HDC James Winnen, Program Coordinator, shares his experience and a few of his favorite pictures from the Berlin World Games

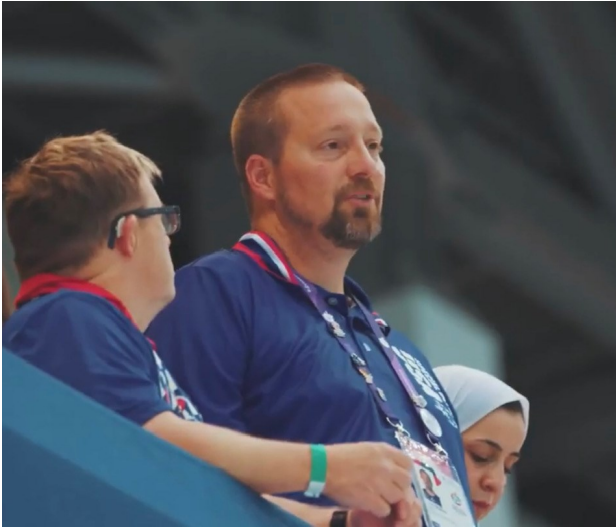
Attending the Special Olympics World Games in Berlin was a dream come true. There were 7,000 Special Olympics athletes and Unified partners from approximately 190 countries competing in 26 sports. In addition, there were also more than 3,000 coaches and 20,000 volunteers. This year, we had two athletes from Arkansas attend their first World Games: Amy Price from Van Buren and Josh Warner from Fayetteville. They proudly represented Arkansas and received seven total medals and ribbons. Amy competed in three track and field events, finishing with a silver in the 3000m run, an 8th place finish in the 1500m run and a 6th place finish in the 4x100 m relay. Josh competed in four power lifting events and finished with a gold on the bench press and silvers in the squat, deadlift, and triple combination.

I served as assistant coach for our Special Olympics USA swim team of eight swimmers. Our swimmers were from eight states and competed in events ranging from the 25m backstroke to the 1500m open water freestyle. Overall, the swim team finished with six individual medals (2 gold, 4 silver), one medal for the team relay (silver), and eight ribbons (two 4th, two 5th, three 6th, and one 8th).

Not only did our team become a family, but we made new friends from all over the world. Special Olympics at the world level gave me the opportunity to feel true inclusion and experience the magnitude of love for these athletes. While we know support is available throughout our communities, it was a global experience this time which magnifies the work that Eunice Shriver began, and that impact was visible in so many lives. Nothing could top the cheers of support from other countries during each event. It was a great honor and the highest privilege to be part of the Special Olympics USA Team.



James Winnen cont'd



James talking with swimmer from Delaware



James with the same Delaware swimmer after he received his medal

Amy Price (Van Buren) and Josh Warner (Fayetteville) were the only athletes from Arkansas who attended World Games.



Meet Charlotte Malvin

Charlotte Malvin is currently a DHS/DDS Program Coordinator in the DDS Licensure Unit. Her role is to approve the PASSE Subdivision Rate changes. She has worked for DHS for 34 ½ years. Her career with DHS began with DDS at the Alexander HDC. There she worked as a Rehabilitation Instructor for 12 years, which is where her passion to serve people with disabilities began. Charlotte left AHDC to work as a Program Eligibility Specialist with DCO; and then on to Adult Protective Services as the Office Manager. When the opportunity was presented, she was blessed to be able to return to DDS where she has worked with the CES Waiver Unit for the past 18 years. Charlotte says her mission in life has always been to help those in need. Charlotte's time with DDS has allowed her the opportunity to expand on her mission. She said, "I've been fortunate to meet a lot of amazing people and form many special relationships."

In Charlotte's free time, she loves to travel and spend time making new memories with her family and friends. In her time outside of DDS, she is also very active in several ministries at her church, where her husband is the Pastor. She would like to make this world a more loving place to live. Charlotte's goal is to strive daily to treat others in the way that she'd like to be treated; having love for one another. Through Charlotte's life experiences she has learned that life is not promised to us, so we must take the time daily to show others how much we care. Charlotte stated, "Aside from being a mother, my greatest achievement is consistently giving my best efforts to my career and embarking upon retirement."



Meet Leroy Wainwright

Leroy Wainwright is the Director of Residential Services at the Jonesboro Human Development Center (JHDC). Leroy has worked for the State of Arkansas for 35 years. Prior to coming to the Jonesboro HDC, Leroy also worked at the Alexander Human Development Center for many years. In his spare time, he likes to practice his golf swing, fish, and occasionally take a small vacation to get away from the normal pace of life.

Since coming to the JHDC, Leroy has worked as a Quality Assurance Field Rep, Staff Development Specialist, Residential Service Manager/Asst. Director for Residential, and now DHS/Program Administrator/Director of Residential Services. He has also been an abuse investigator and CPI/CPR instructor among many other duties.

In the private sector, Leroy has worked with Arkansas Easter Seals, Stepping Stone Shelter, Rivendell Behavior Health Hospital, and Focus Inc. Leroy has always worked in the human services field. He loves assisting others, especially DDS clients.

Leroy wanted to give thanks to the people who have trusted him in the positions and with the responsibilities that have been given to him over his career. He would not let this article be written without thanking, “John Rhodes, Retired Director at Alexander HDC, Ralph Nelson, Retired Superintendent, Alexander HDC, Nancy Craft, Retired Superintendent, Alexander HDC, Tracy Harris, former Superintendent, Alexander HDC, Mark Stitch, former Superintendent Alexander HDC, Forrest Steele, Retired Superintendent, Jonesboro HDC, our beloved Steve Farmer, former Superintendent, Jonesboro HDC, Debbie Eddington, former Assistant Superintendent, Jonesboro HDC, and now Diane Keith, current Superintendent/supervisor, and most of all my God Jehovah.”

Leroy feels like he has shared his retirement speech for this article, so he said when he does retire, he wants to say the following:

“I feel I have grown old with some of the residents that I have had the privilege to serve at some of the different HDCs and in the private sector now over the years. Starting back in the 80’s, when going to work, I told family and friends I was going to have fun. The HDCs would always have plenty of activities for the residents to be involved in for active participation on campus and in the community. I believe the HDCs are a big part of the communities now, and they are needed. They are the homes of many Arkansans, and DHS helps all people to achieve great goals in life. The reason I return day after day, for more than 35 years, is the satisfaction of seeing and helping the residents smile and have a great day. I have worked and assisted with some of the most challenging situations over the years, but I know the residents depend on us and look forward to seeing us the next day because we have become part of their lives, like families.”

Submitted by~ Diane Keith, Jonesboro HDC Superintendent



There is a lot coming up at DHS. Stay tuned!

Save the Date

October

DDS Fall Food & Craft Fair– 10/6

AHSEA/DHS Employee of the Year– 10/18

DHS Trick or Treating Event– 10/31

Arkansas Tax Free Weekend 2023



Beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday August 5, 2023, and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Sunday August 6, 2023, the State of Arkansas will hold its sales tax holiday. This allows shoppers the opportunity to purchase certain school supplies, school art supplies, school instructional materials, and clothing free of state and local sales or use tax.

All retailers are required to participate and may not charge tax on items that are legally tax-exempt during the Sales Tax Holiday. For more information, please visit the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration's website.



Comments, Suggestions, and Q&A

What would you like to learn more about or see featured? Please send all comments, suggestions, and Q&A to Yvette.swift@dhs.arkansas.gov

The Blue Umbrella NEWSLETTER



August 2023



Missing the beach?

Bring the ocean to your office without the mess! We have a wide selection of beach themed décor - door hangers, paintings, decorative bottles, and much more. Support our talented artists and bring the peacefulness of the beach to any space.

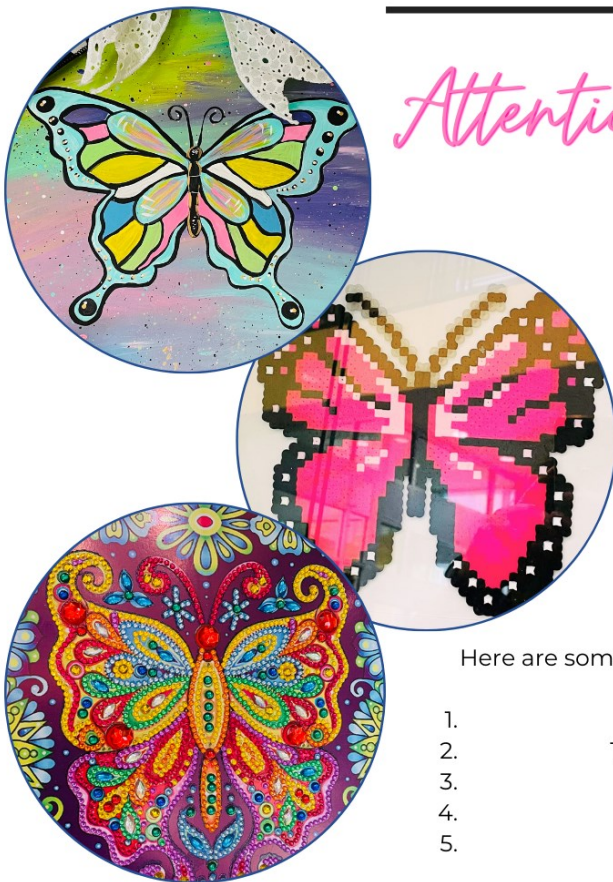


Shop Online → www.blueumbrellaar.org

New Arrivals



New wrist wallets, lanyards, and bracelets from Booneville Human Development Center were popular during the farmers market and continue to be top sellers in The Blue Umbrella. Come by to pick out your favorite soon!



Attention Butterfly Lovers!

A swarm of butterflies have landed in The Blue Umbrella in the form of paintings, perler bead designs, diamond art, embroidered pins, and magnets!

Here are some fun facts you may, or may not, have known about butterflies:

1. Butterfly wings are transparent.
2. There are almost 20,000 butterfly species.
3. Butterflies use their feet to taste.
4. Butterflies have a liquid diet.
5. Top butterfly flight speed is 12 mph.

Visit us in store Monday - Friday 10 AM - 2 PM or shop anytime online at www.blueumbrellaar.org/shop