

PERSPECTIVE

JULY 3, 2006

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **St. Andrew's Place has provided housing for adults with developmental disabilities since 1973.**
- **10% of children with mental retardation are at risk for epilepsy. Source: Epilepsy Foundation**

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HIRED

Harrison B. Black has been hired as the new Executive Director of St. Andrew's Place. Black has worked in the helping field for over 10 years. Recently, he was the Mental Health Program Director at West Alabama Mental Health Center in Demopolis, AL. Black coordinated mental health, emergency services, residential, and co-occurring disorders groups. He served a secondary duty as MIS Administrator by overseeing five servers including Windows 2000 and UNIX environments. Black developed WAMHCs first Web site and instituted its redesign in 2006. The Web site allowed visitors to learn about WAMHC programs and events. The Human Resource section allowed perspec-

tive employees to download and complete an application for employment.

Black was an In-Home Therapist at Indian Rivers Mental Health Center (IRMHC). IRMHC was the second largest mental health center in Alabama. While at the IRMHC Black provided individual counseling and case management services. Black conducted groups for at-risk teens at local middle school for PRIDE of Tuscaloosa. He has collaborated with the Department of Human Resources, Probate Court, Juvenile Court, Family Court, and Juvenile Probation.

He served as Quality Assurance Team Leader supporting the clinical records of Mental



Executive Director, Harrison B. Black, conducts a strategy meeting before moving into his office.

Health and Substance Abuse divisions. As a Team Leader Black coordinated staff and computer training. He was instrumental in the upgrade to networked computer that used ECHO software to manage consumer information and accounting.

(see Director pg 3)

JOHNSON NAMED ACTING OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Operation Director, Elie Wilson, left St. Andrew's Place in March of this year. Mr. Wilson is currently in training to become a Probation Office for the State of Alabama. Ms. Yolanda Johnson has been named Acting Operations Director. Ms. Johnson has a myriad of experience in mental retardation and mental

health. While living in New Orleans she served as the QMRP for Progressive Health Care Providers. She has worked as direct care staff for persons with mental retardation, supervised staff as a Family Services Coordinator, and coordinated all aspects of treatment as Intake Coordinator for Central

City Mental Health. Ms. Johnson recently worked as a Mental Health Therapist at West Alabama Mental Health Center (WAMHC) in Demopolis, AL. WAMHC provides services for mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse. Her (see Operations pg 3)

JAMES DANIELS MEMORIAL FUND ESTABLISHED

James Daniels, long-time employee of the men's residence, died last month. Upon his death several family members of residents sent donations to start a memorial fund in his name. The fund was approved by the Board of Directors at their June meeting. As this fund builds it will be used to provide scholarships to our residents to attend camps, help with the cost of clothing for those low on funds, and provide re-

sources for extracurricular activities (movies, museum visits, and sporting events) throughout Alabama.

James had many duties at the home including cooking for eight residents, providing for activities, and transportation to various appointments. James checked on each of his residents even when he was off duty.

If you would like to contribute to the James Daniels Memo-

rial Fund be sure you place the name of the fund in the memo area of your check and mail to St. Andrew's Place, 1024 12th St. S., Birmingham, AL 35205. Please remember that all donations to St. Andrew's Place are tax deductible. If you would like to know other way to contribute St. Andrew's Place visit our redesigned Web site at www.saintandrewsplace.org and click on donations.



James Daniels, devoted employee, smiles for a candid picture.

DONATION DRIVE IN EFFECT

St. Andrew's Place donation drive is in full swing. Many of the current donations have been put to use immediately. Donations from area businesses including Driver Contracting & Installations, Inc. in Trussville, AL have allowed offices to be refurbished. Additional donations from individuals included a dining table, chairs, and garden furniture for the Haney Apartments.

The men's and women's residence received dirt devils and chairs while Twin Oaks Apartments received a microwave and sofa. Many items are still needed for the homes. Several facilities need dining room chairs, cooking utensils, dinner plates, and cereal bowls. One apartment at Twin Oaks needs an upright washer/dryer.

Gift cards to Wal-Mart or Office Depot can be immediately used for the items most needed. All gifts are tax deductible and greatly appreciated. For other ideals of what is needed visit their Web site www.saintandrewsplace.org The "Donation" tab at the top of the home page will direct readers to ideas for contributions.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS NOTED

Vital to any organization is its volunteer program. Volunteers may be students, single adults, couples, families, or professionals. There are several opportunities that are currently open. *Perspective* needs volunteer writers. Several residents have requested classes for arts and crafts. Volunteers may spon-

sor a night out for one of the homes. If you have a talent that you would like to share, call St. Andrew's Place to discuss how your talents can be put to good use. Some residents would enjoy being taken on outings to movies, shopping, or local attractions and events.

The Volunteer Program is

coordinated by Acting Operations Director Yolanda Johnson. You may call 205.322.4439. All volunteers must pass a criminal background check. Volunteers who drive on behalf of St. Andrew's Place must have a good driving record. Staff will work to match your talents to the needs of the residents.

"Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need."

Kahlil Gibran (1883 - 1931)

STAFF ACCEPT ORGANIZATION CHANGE

Organizational change is one of the processes that brings stress on an entire organization. St. Andrew's Place has welcomed a new Executive Director and Acting Operations Director. With a change in administration came changes in the operations and the structure of the Agency.

The new structure involved the hiring of home managers to supervise the operations

of each home. The Home Manager will supervise the staff, coordinate menus, manage transportation, and coordinate activities. Existing staff was used to fill these new positions because of their experience. The Agency has been privileged to have many staff members with over 10 years of residential knowledge several directly with St. Andrew's place. The residents have welcomed

these changes as they continue to work with the staff that is known to them.

The Agency is in the process of hiring new part-time staff. This will help to decrease over time and allow for more latitude in hiring additional staff. By decreasing overtime payroll costs St. Andrew's Place will have more funding for projects that will benefit the residents and staff.



Home Manager, Helen Hill, and Beverly Burr, Direct Service Professional, discuss resident involvement at a recent staff meeting.

DIRECTOR (FROM PG 1)

Black is known to west Alabama as he has spent the past 20 years in the region. He has resided in Livingston, Demopolis, and Tuscaloosa. He has compiled resource manuals for each of the areas where he has worked.

Black's education includes a master's in counseling and business education from the University of West Alabama and a Graduate Specialty in

Gerontology from the University of Alabama. He has taken additional classes in counseling and technology from the University of Montevallo and Mississippi State University, respectively. Black stayed current in the counseling and technology fields by attending counseling, mental retardation, and national technology conferences.

Former Executive Director,

Dr. Harry Hamilton, is teaching full-time at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Dr. Hamilton continues to be a valued part of St. Andrew's Place with occasional visits to administration and residential homes. Marvin Clemons, former Interim Executive Director, has returned full-time to his private practice.

The idea of perfect closes your mind to new standards. When you drive hard toward one ideal, you miss opportunities and paths, not to mention hurting your confidence. Believe in your potential and then go out and explore it; don't limit it.
John Elliot, Ph.D.,
Reverse Psychology for Success

OPERATIONS (FROM PG 1)

last position was as a Crisis Counselor for WAMHC/Project Rebound. The project provided crisis counseling and agency referrals to victims of Hurricane Katrina. This effort was close to Johnson's heart as she herself was an evacuee.

Johnson returned to New Orleans to work in a position

at LSU two weeks before Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. In the aftermath of the storm, Johnson assisted her sister and brother in moving to Alabama. Her sister continues to reside in Alabama working as a Head Start teacher. Her brother is in Texas studying to be an auto-industrial die-

sel technician. Johnson education was completed in Louisiana with a MSW from Southern University in 2001.



Yolanda Johnson, Acting Operations Director, completes the weekly work schedule.

We are on the Web

www.saintandrewsplace.org

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L I V I N G . L E A R N I N G . L A U G H I N G . E N J O Y I N G L I F E .

Mission

St. Andrew's Place is a non-profit organization existing for the purpose of providing permanent residence, ensuring basic necessities, care, socialization, training, and maintenance skills for adults with mental retardation. We help our residents fully integrate into the community to ensure the right to enjoy life and make a positive contribution to society.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN IN FULL SWING

This year the goal for St. Andrew's Place Capital Campaign is \$75,000. To date over \$25,000 has been raised. One of the capital improvements within this fund is the replacement of the roof on the women's residence which should be completed this year. Taking the lead of support has been St. Stephen's, St. Luke's, and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. All are located in Birmingham. Major support has been garnered from the Episcopal Diocese of Alabama and BlueCross BlueShield of Ala-

bama. It is a requirement of board membership to give an annual charitable contribution.

Administration is developing an office for Twin Oaks Apartments. The office will have dining facilities, staff office, and a training room equipped with computers. Currently the space has one computer for staff use and one computer in the training room. The training room will eventually hold four computers. Staff will be taught how to use email, word processing, and search the Internet. These

computers will also be used by residents who have learned computer skills at day programs. Donors wishing to contribute computers for this project may contact the Executive Director, Harrison B. Black, at the Administrative Office. Computers (minimum requirements) must be PCs capable of running Windows XP, 80 GB hard drives, 256 MB RAM, CD, 3 USB ports, and network compatible. Donations of MicroSoft software are also accepted.

