

## National Accreditation Awarded, PHAB Announces!

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has achieved national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The national accreditation program works to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing and ultimately transforming the quality and performance of health departments. ADPH is one of 26 state health departments that have achieved accreditation through PHAB since 2011.

"Accreditation is a way to help us evaluate and improve our overall service to the public," State Health Officer Dr. Tom Miller said. "The accreditation process helps to ensure that the programs and services we provide are as responsive as possible to the needs of our community. By achieving accreditation, we are demonstrating increased accountability and credibility to the public, funders, elected officials, and our partner organizations. We will continue to improve our services and performance to meet the public health needs of those we serve as effectively as possible."

The national accreditation program sets standards for the nation's nearly 3,000 governmental public health departments to continuously improve the quality of their services and performance. To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards and measures.

Dr. John Meigs, Chairman of the State Committee of Public Health, said, "We are pleased that the Alabama Department of Public Health has been accredited for the next five years by the Public Health Accreditation Board. This milestone accomplishment is phenomenal news, and I commend Dr. Miller and his staff for this monumental achievement. This is the official recognition that the department meets or exceeds the rigorous standards established and is committed to continuous quality improvement to meet our state's needs as effectively as possible."

"The ADPH joins the growing ranks of accredited health departments in a strong commitment to their public health mission," said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender. "The peer-review process provides valuable feedback to inform health departments of their strengths and areas for improvement, so that they can better protect and promote the health of the people they serve in their communities. Residents of a community served by a nationally accredited

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**Celebrating the occasion on June 26 are Chief of Staff Michele Jones, Accreditation Coordinator Carrie Allison and DRP member April Mullins.**



**Accreditation Leadership Team and Document Review Panel members are shown, left to right, front row, are Bob Hinds, Teela Sanders, Viki Brant, Brandi Pouncey, Sherry Bradley, Dr. Mary McIntyre, Nancy Wright, Janice Cook, Michele Jones, Carrie Allison, April Mullins. Second row, Jamey Durham, Betsy Cagle, Dr. Debra Hodges, Karl Bryant, Chris Haag, Valerie Cochran, Brent Hatcher and Accreditation Specialist Kathy Vincent. Not pictured are Phyllis Mardis, Andy Mullins and Jeffrey Wright.**

# Jennifer McNeel Named State Clerical Director

A warm and ready smile and an optimistic outlook are what one encounters when meeting the department’s new State Clerical Director, Jennifer McNeel.

Director for Field Operations, Ricky Elliott, announced her appointment to this vacant position in the Office of Clinical Management and Practice effective May 16. She will be working with Chief Nursing Officer, Valerie Cochran, and Community Affairs Director, Carolyn Bern. Ms. McNeel brings with her a wealth of experience in several areas of public health at the county and state levels. Ms. McNeel has been employed with the department for 16 years in several positions, including most recently as case management and clinic Medicaid billing liaison. She has also served on the Central Office Care Coordination QI Team and is presently involved in a QI Kaizen Training.

In her new leadership position, she will be putting her talent as a “detail oriented person” into many aspects of her work. Her duties include: continuing her work to recover revenue from Medicaid for billable clinic and case management programs, assisting with the transition of this task to the Centralized Billing Unit (CBU) which will be under the direction of Arnita Shepherd, updating the County Health Record Manual when PHALCON forms and instructions are changed, working with IT staff to address PHALCON problems/needs as they arise, coordinating Fee Manual updates as needed, assisting with the testing, training, and implementation of the electronic health record (EHR) and serving as a “super user” in order to aid staff with questions they may have, providing assistance with developing / modifying policies and procedures that impact clinic operations, providing guidance for the area clerical directors, and representing county administrative support assistants at the Central Office level.

A 1999 graduate of Troy State University who holds a B.S. degree in Social Work, Ms. McNeel briefly worked with the Dallas County Department of Human Resources before beginning her public health career at the Dallas County Health Department in April 2001. She transferred to the Autauga County Health Department in June 2006. During her time at the county health departments, Ms. McNeel served as a case manager for the Elderly and Disabled Waiver Program, the 530 Waiver Program, and Home Health. In March 2008, she transferred to the Central Office to assist with the Alabama Care Coordination Records Network (ACORN) system which is the documentation and coding system used by public health social workers and which provides a variety of manager reports that assist social work directors and managers. Her duties then transitioned into assisting case managers with billing corrections. She then transferred to Revenue Recovery where she began assisting with billing corrections for clinical programs and continued to assist with corrections for case management programs. Ms. McNeel served as acting director of Revenue Recovery for a period of time.



Surprisingly, all of her Montgomery experience has been located in offices on the tenth floor of the RSA Tower.

As State Clerical Director, Ms. McNeel is looking forward to the challenges the new position will offer. “This will give me an opportunity to reach further out into public health and have a greater, positive impact from the Central Office.”

## Alabama Department of Public Health

**Mission**  
To promote, protect, and improve the health of individuals and communities in Alabama.

**Vision Statement**  
The Alabama Department of Public Health will lead the state in assuring the health of Alabamians by promoting healthy, safe, prepared, and informed communities.

**Value Statement**  
The Alabama Department of Public Health believes that all people have a right to be healthy. Our core values are the provision of high-quality services, a competent and professional workforce, and delivering compassionate care.

## Alabama’s Health

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Thomas M. Miller, M.D. ....	State Health Officer
Jamey Durham, M.B.A. ....	Director, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
Arrol Sheehan, M.A. ....	Editor
Noelle Ahmann .....	Graphic Designer



## Office of Women's Health Bestows Honors

The Office of Women's Health (OWH) recognized two public health employees whose contributions to community initiatives have been instrumental in the success of the office during the past year.

The Heart of Gold Award, sponsored by Dr. Jessica Hardy, was presented to Lita Chatham, nutritionist with the Nutrition and Physical Activity Division. This annual award is given in memory of Mozzelle Thomas to an individual who has demonstrated the true meaning of "a giving, loving community oriented heart."

Dr. Debra Hodges, Evaluation Unit director with the



***The Chair of the OWH Steering Committee, Leigh Minchew, Lita Chatham and Dr. Jessica Hardy are pictured.***

### ***Accreditation, continued from page 1***

health department can be assured that their health department has demonstrated the capacity to protect and promote the health of that community."

Accreditation Coordinator Carrie Allison said, "I want to extend a special 'thank you' to Leslie Hay who designed the computer systems that the Accreditation Leadership Team and Document Review Panel (DRP) used to manage all of the documentation that was submitted to PHAB. His systems made our process so much easier by allowing communication between two different teams to review over 300 documents on separate timelines."

Ms. Allison also thanked former DRP members and domain leads Stacey Adams, Jonathan Edwards, John

Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, was awarded the Linda Mays Volunteer of the Year Award, sponsored by OWH staff. This award is presented to an individual who has volunteered services "above and beyond the norm."

OWH provides statewide leadership and coordination to promote the health of women and girls through policy, advocacy, education, and partnership. OWH achieves its mission and vision by educating health professionals and motivating behavior change in consumers through the dissemination of health information.



***Debra Hodges, Ph.D., is shown receiving the Linda Mays Volunteer of the Year Award from Dr. Jessica Hardy.***

Hankins, Carol Heier, Becky Leavins, Jim McVay, Sally Palmer, Rachel Parrish, Dale Quinney, and Debra Thrash for their work that helped make accreditation possible.

### **About the Public Health Accreditation Board**

PHAB, established in 2007, was created to serve as the national public health accrediting body, and is jointly funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The development of national public health accreditation has involved, and is supported by, public health leaders and practitioners from the national, Tribal, state, and local levels. Learn more about PHAB by visiting [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org).

# Realignment Will Create Public Health Districts October 1

On October 1, the department will transition from 11 public health areas, to 6 public health districts, plus the Jefferson and Mobile county health departments. State Health Officer, Dr. Tom Miller, conducted a staff meeting by satellite June 1 to discuss key aspects of the organizational realignment with employees statewide.

“This is very much an evolutionary process that will be modified along the way,” Dr. Miller said. “We want to be proactive in positioning the agency to navigate future financial challenges that may impact us. We are facing funding uncertainties at the federal, state, and local levels. While it is unknown to what extent any of these uncertainties will materialize, it is prudent to position the agency to be prepared rather than reactive.” These uncertainties include:

- Proposed implementation of Medicaid Regional Care Organizations (RCO) that change payment from a fee-for-service model paid directly to the provider to capitated payments (fixed sum per Medicaid eligible) paid to the RCO which subsequently provides services either directly or through subcontractors at a negotiated rate.
- Continuing decreases in clinic volume over the past several years in county health departments.
- Federal changes with the Maternal and Child Health Block Grant which shifts allowable activities from supporting clinic service to broader community and population focused activities.
- Federal proposals that would limit Medicaid funding to states.

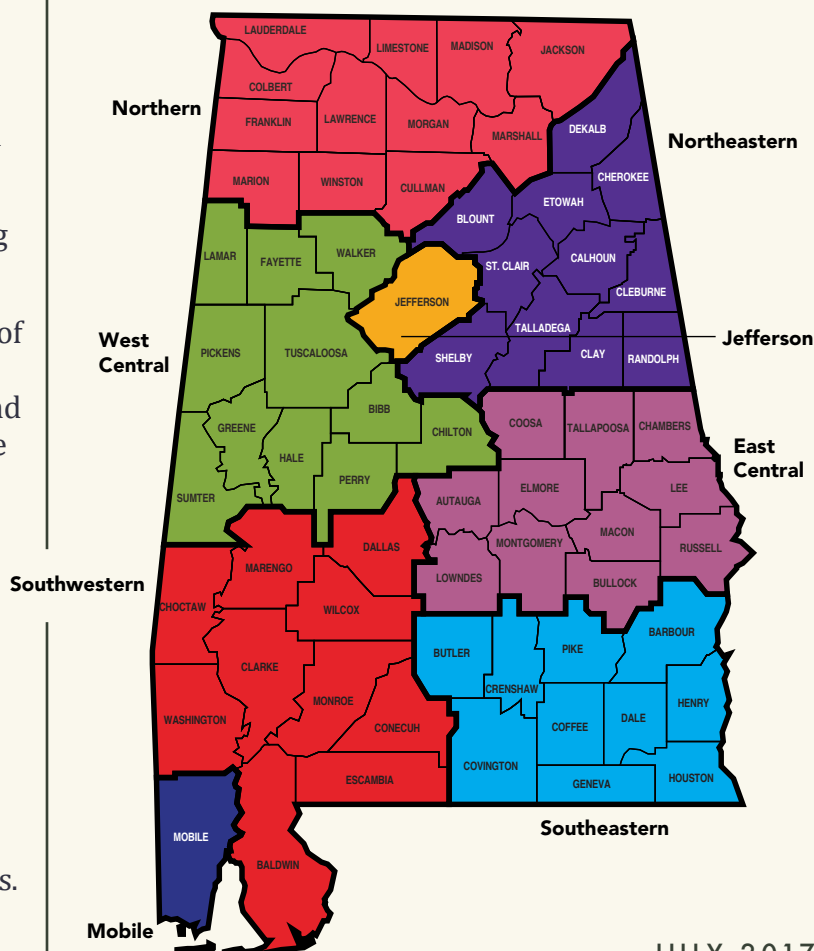
The new districts will have geographic names instead of numbers. Factors utilized in creating the new districts include geographic, transportation, service demand and financial considerations. Efforts were made to equalize the number of counties within each district.

Dr. Miller addressed employee concerns by assuring that an employee’s base will not change due to the realignment. He stated that any change in base would be driven by business reasons, as has always been the case. In addition, an employee will not lose seniority in the event of future layoffs due to the realignment. All county and area level employees will become district level employees effective October 1. We will no longer have county level employees. In the event of a layoff, an individual employee will be in a larger pool of individuals.

In conjunction with the realignment, the department is in the process of establishing standards for clinic staffing and production. This will enable us to move county clinic operations in a direction that reflects demand for services, thereby improving our effectiveness and efficiency.

The realignment to districts and the establishment of staffing and production standards will position the agency to face the uncertainties ahead. Making these changes now provides the best opportunity to address any needed reductions in force through attrition rather than layoffs. Dr. Miller stressed that layoffs would always be a last resort.

This is not the first realignment of operations within the department. For example, in 1981, the late State Health Officer, Dr. Ira L. Myers, decentralized the department by forming six public health areas that corresponded to the multi-county health systems agencies that were established for health planning. Jefferson and Mobile counties later became single-county public health areas. Following a report by an area reorganization task force, former State Health Officer, Dr. Donald Williamson, changed the area structure in 1995 to increase the number of public health areas from 8 to the current 11.





# ALPHA Honors Public Health Professionals

The 61st Annual Meeting and Health Education Conference of the Alabama Public Health Association centered on the theme “A Lifetime of Public Health.” Members honored several outstanding public health professionals at an awards luncheon April 7 meeting at the Hill Student Center in Birmingham.



**Melanie Dickens**

**Melanie Dickens, M.S.,** was presented the Guy M. Tate Award. This award is presented annually to a public health employee, group or agency with ten years or less employment in public health for outstanding current or recent service or contribution to public

health. The service should be one which promotes and protects public health.

Described as creative, charismatic, courteous, caring, and dedicated, supporters wrote that Melanie “eagerly accomplishes her work in the only way she knows how...with enthusiasm, pride, and resourcefulness.” Colleagues said Ms. Dickens works to make a difference in the lives of others. This includes homeless individuals for whom she organized a multidenominational coalition of churches to open their doors during the colder months to house and feed this population, collects bottled water and other items homeless people might need, and brings awareness to this often forgotten segment of the population.

Ms. Dickens built a strong coalition leading the Smoke-Free Shoals to address problems associated with secondhand smoke in public venues. One innovative approach she used to increase awareness was to distribute burp cloths printed with a smoke-free message. Ms. Dickens actively participates in the Children’s Policy Councils for multiple counties and is an active member of the Sheffield Kiwanis Club. She is an inspector with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Tobacco Inspection Branch, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, based in Florence.



**Tarina Moores**

The Virginia Kendrick Award recognizes

individuals who have provided notable service to the people of Alabama while serving in a supporting role in the field of public health. This year’s recipient, **Tarina Moores**, administrative support assistant with the Behavioral Health Division, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, has been described as a person who “is not satisfied with the acceptable, but is a perfectionist who makes everyone around her better.” In addition to clerical and support duties assigned to her, she serves as the leave clerk and travel coordinator for the approximately 80 employees of her bureau.

Supporters wrote that Ms. Moores is conscientious and thorough, maintains excellent standards, and routinely mentors and assists newer clerical staff with their duties. Ms. Moores is a professional who works well with everyone to resolve problems and get questions answered.

Although it is not a required duty, she is a Certified Child Passenger Safety Technician who volunteers at local monthly car seat clinics and works very closely with the Alabama Child Passenger Restraint Program. Certification requires extra time and training. The reward to her is that she gets to work with families to ensure their child car seats are installed correctly so that, in case of an accident, the risk of injury or death is greatly lessened. Finally, Ms. Moores exhibits a very good understanding of the programs, missions, and efforts she supports in her daily duties, as well as maintaining a great attitude toward her work.

The D.G. Gill Award is intended to honor an individual who has made exceptional contributions to public health in Alabama. This year’s winner of the Gill Award is **Michael Smith, M.S., M.Ed.,** director of the Distance Learning and Telehealth Division, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. Smith



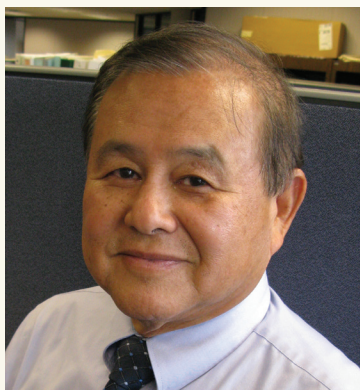
**Michael Smith**

established the Video Communications Division in 1990 to provide video services for the ADPH inservice training, public relations, educational programs, and information services. In 1995, he coordinated the purchase of a Ku-band satellite uplink vehicle specifically designed to provide interactive delivery of educational programs via satellite. The division has become a nationally recognized provider of training

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and public information for health professionals across the nation. Supporters wrote, “In keeping with the changing landscape of healthcare delivery, Michael had the vision and expertise to take telehealth from concept to reality in county health departments. This ensures that the services needed, particularly in our rural areas, are provided in the most convenient manner possible for patients.”

Supporters describe Smith as “forward thinking” and praised him for “looking out for the best interests of the department and those whom we serve.” One said, “He doesn’t see barriers as obstacles to overcome, but as opportunities to showcase what we do best,” and for his excellent leadership and vision. Michael and his staff are not only gracious, but “have a way of taking those of us who are clueless about such matters and making us look quite professional.”



**Salvador Gray**

The Ira L. Myers Award for Excellence in Public Health was established to honor Dr. Myers, former State Health Officer, for his accomplishments by recognizing an individual, group, or organization who, through excellence in work, has made a significant impact on some aspect of

public health in Alabama. **Salvador Gray**, now retired director of the State Lead Contractor Certification Programs and the Lead/Indoor Air Quality Branch of the Bureau of Environmental Services, was presented this award. Coworkers wrote about his passion for environmental health and his dedication to ensure that patients’ families are receiving all available services to live in a lead-free environment.

A longtime colleague praised Gray’s efforts and persistence to have enabling legislation passed to protect children from the deleterious effect of lead-based paint in the Lead Reduction Act of 1997. Gray then participated in the long, detailed, and sometimes arduous task of writing regulations to implement what became known as the Alabama Lead Contractors Certification Program. He worked to ensure that the rules were fair as well as effective in preventing childhood lead poisoning.

Throughout this process, the supporter stated that Gray “would always pull us back to the ‘why’ we were doing this—to ensure that no children in Alabama

would be exposed to lead from paint in their residence or daycare center because of poor, careless, and uninformed construction and renovation practices.” Gray collaborates with social services staff and attends coalition meetings to get recommendations on how to improve services provided to Alabama citizens. He was described as “a catalyst for action to abate the physical sources and work towards prevention.”

The recipient of the Anne Mangum Smith Public Health Nurse of the Year Award must exemplify the mission of public health nursing in Alabama, which is “to assure conditions in which individuals, families, and communities can be healthy utilizing the unique expertise of public health nurses to assess, plan and implement, and prevent disease.” The 2017 award recipient is **Carol Wilson, R.N.**, nurse supervisor for Public Health Area 8.



**Carol Wilson**

In support of the ADPH mission, public health nurses are often the first face of representation to perform these duties as well as to selflessly serve as a liaison among patients in the communities and the core decision-makers within public health. Ms. Wilson has served 28 years in her nursing career with ADPH as clinic nurse, area nursing director, and nurse supervisor. Supporters describe her as “an advocate for the patients as well as for public health.” One supporter wrote, “As a person, Ms. Wilson is dedicated, generous, and welcoming. As a colleague, she is an avid team player. As a leader, she is a visionary who serves with the same passion that she leads.” Ms. Wilson is involved in many community activities, has been a CPR instructor, worked on the ADPH Emergency Response Team, and communicated with many local nurses in the community. In addition to her other duties, she serves as a preceptor for students for colleges in the area and is involved with the training/mentoring of new employees.

The Frederick S. Wolf Award recognizes an individual who has been active in public health at the local level and who has demonstrated efficiency, dedication, and professionalism in delivery of public health services; and who has provided unselfish community services in areas unrelated to public health. This year’s award winner is **Choona Lang, R.N., B.S.N., M.H.A., D.H.Ed.**

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**Choona Lang**

In addition to her professional responsibilities as State Trauma/Health System Administrator, Office of Emergency Medical Services, that take her on onsite hospital visits throughout the state, Ms. Lang dedicates her time and effort to church, community, and civic

organizations. Nominators said Ms. Lang “steadfastly and untiringly, goes beyond the call of duty in her quest to bring awareness to her constituents concerning health challenges that plague all of us.” They noted her leadership and commitment to community service with events such as health care workshops, seminars, and health care awareness programs. After receiving 4013C status to support a center located in the neighborhood where she grew up, she and other volunteers are regularly available to provide academic tutoring, life skills training, and GED classes. She directs the Christian Education and Health and Wellness Ministry at her church where she incorporates healthy living into the curriculum and plans activities during the month of February to bring awareness to heart disease. This includes preparing heart healthy breakfasts and distributing literature to educate the membership and encourage them to take care of their hearts. As an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Beta Nu Omega Chapter, she supports activities that promote awareness for various diseases and serves on the Health Services Incorporated, Inc., Board of Directors. She also chairs the Montgomery Christian School Board. While she remains very active in the community, Ms. Lang also communicates with family members and friends to ensure they are compliant with doctors’ visits and medicine regimens.

### **ALPHA Hall of Fame Inductees, Class of 2017**

The Alabama Public Health Association Hall of Fame recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the enhancement and advancement of ALPHA. The inductees for 2017 are retired ADPH employees **Jackie Holliday and Shelia Puckett**.

Holliday has been called “the embodiment of a public health professional who understands our mission and how our decisions can affect the lives of so many people.” Holliday has served the association admirably in many capacities for more than three decades, including the offices of 2013 ALPHA president,

president elect, vice president, past president, and Southern Health Association delegate, in addition to service on numerous boards and in various roles promoting public health throughout the state. Colleagues call Jackie firm but fair, quickly adding that he works with his heart as well, always making others laugh and smile. Known as a problem solver, his coworkers noted that he listened to his staff and helped them think “outside the box” before determining the best solution. A supporter wrote, “His devotion to duty, work ethic, and uncanny ability to build and achieve consensus among his peers is where I feel he has no equal.” Many of his former employees proudly call him their mentor and servant leader. Since his retirement from ADPH in 2014, Jackie has remained active in ALPHA and the Alabama Environmental Health Association, plus he donates his time to rural prostate cancer screenings.



**Jackie Holliday**

Ms. Puckett spent 26 years serving the citizens of the state as a departmental employee. In this capacity, she was on the front lines, serving some of the neediest people in Alabama as office manager for the Elmore County Health Department. She then became office manager for the Bureau of Professional and Support Services at the Central Office, and upon completion of her college degree summa cum laude, she was promoted to health services administrator, state clerical director, and served as TEAM Academy project coordinator. Prior to her retirement in 2011, Ms. Puckett was very active in ALPHA and served as treasurer for two years. The association was so ingrained in her that she was hired as part-time executive director and has held this responsible position ever since. She has efficiently handled the accounting for numerous ALPHA-sponsored educational events while remaining pleasant, calm, and available to assist the board and the membership. Organizational skills, people skills, and a jovial “can do” attitude exemplify everything that public health represents, and Ms. Puckett serves with a smile as a positive role model for others.



**Shelia Puckett**

## Retirees

The following departmental employees have retired recently:

### March

**Michael Carnley**  
Information Technology  
**Joan Cox**  
Limestone County  
Health Department  
**Barbara Davis**  
Home and Community  
Services  
**Roy Gilley**  
Clinical Laboratory  
**Thadous Pittman**  
Environmental Services

### April

**Terrie Bedgood**  
Facilities Management  
**Janet Brealy**  
Family Health Services  
**Charles Brookins**  
Environmental Services  
**Joann Brooks**  
Lee County Health  
Department  
**Jimmy Free**  
Facilities Management  
**Teresa Gibson**  
Talladega County Health  
Department  
**Salvador Gray**  
Environmental Services  
**Delores Harrison**  
Family Health Services  
**Roxanne Isom**  
Health Care Facilities

**Susan McElvy**  
Office of Human  
Resources  
**Jeanette Tyson**  
Tuscaloosa County  
Health Department  
**Catherine Nettles**  
Clinical Laboratory  
**Nancy Robinson**  
Clinical Laboratory  
**Ned Taylor**  
Limestone County  
Health Department  
**Nancy Wilson**  
Family Health Services  
**Tammy Yager**  
Public Health Area 3

### May

**Cynthia Carpenter**  
Field Operations  
**John Ellison**  
Health Promotion  
and Chronic Diseases  
**Sandra Harris**  
Public Health Area 1  
**Janet Mims**  
Chilton County Health  
Department  
**Joseph Hulbert**  
Public Health Area 11 -  
STD  
**Deborah Sullins**  
Marion County Health  
Department

### Terri Taylor

Public Health Area 1  
**Gayle Whatley**  
Family Health Services  
**Rosalyn Wilks**  
HIV/AIDS  
**Sherry Young**  
Health Care Facilities

### June

**Melissa Hornsby**  
Information Technology  
**Sheila Murray**  
Public Health Area 2  
**Brenda Robbins**  
Colbert County Health  
Department  
**David Rozear**  
Information Technology  
**Daniel St. Onge**  
Public Health Area 11  
**Deborah Stowe**  
Cherokee County Health  
Department  
**Kim Woods**  
Public Health Area 2 - TB

### July

**Gloria Branch**  
Madison County Health  
Department  
**Sylvia Wood**  
Blount County Health  
Department



**Coworkers bid farewell and best wishes to Charlene Thomas, MT (ASCP) as she retired from 26 years of service with the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories effective May 1. She directed the Quality Management Division.**



**Colleagues honored Mary Frazier's nearly 38 years of service to the Office of Radiation Control with a reception May 22 at the RSA Tower.**

## Outstanding Quarterly Achievements Recognized

**S**ondra Reese, director of the Chronic Disease Division, left, was presented the Director's Award and April Mullins, Assistant to the Director, center, was presented the Star Trophy for their achievements during the second quarter of 2017. Awards were based on nominations from their colleagues. They are shown with Jamey Durham, director of the bureaus of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease and Professional and Support Services, who presented the awards at a June 2 staff meeting.





## Lab Employees Promote Alzheimer's Awareness

Employees of the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories went purple June 16 to support Alzheimer's disease awareness. Shown on the first row are, left to right, Jann Guthrie, Julia Hall, Vonda Helton, Courtney Jones, Shelia Carpenter and Dr. Aretha Williams. On the top row are Dutchie Tillis, Amy McClure, Blake Moody, Debbie Hines and Robert Kelly. Early detection means an individual can explore treatments that may provide some relief of symptoms and remain independent longer.



## Cathleen Hutto Runs for Charity and Health

Home health nurse Cathleen Hutto of the Lawrence County Health Department wants to set an example for others that former smokers can excel in physical competitions. Ms. Hutto won first place in her age division in the Bridge Street Half Marathon April 9, and finished the 13.1 mile course in just 1 hour, 46 minutes, 52 seconds. After quitting smoking four years ago, she was determined to improve her health, and may run three miles before coming to work. During the month of March she committed to a goal of running a total of 200 miles and succeeded. She chooses to run only in 5Ks, marathons and other races that are charity based. In addition to running, Ms. Hutto placed fifth overall in a recent body building competition.



## Nurses Participate in Training at Jacksonville State University

Central Office nurses and non-clinic nurses, shown here, took part in an educational seminar May 17. The Jacksonville State University Department of Nursing faculty, in conjunction with the Calhoun-Cleburne County Medical Reserve Corps, facilitated a critical skills training that included disaster scenarios and learning stations on topics such as basic wound care, dressing change, bleeding control, catheter insertion and management, and health screenings with vital signs. The topics of universal precautions and personal protective equipment were also covered.





## Environmental Services Q and A

The following questions were submitted from the public to our website, and were answered by employees of the Bureau of Environmental Services.

**QUESTION:** I am considering selling my honey butter to the public. What do I need to do, or steps do I need to take, to begin? I want to make sure I follow all outlined procedures.

**RESPONSE:** Honey is considered a raw agricultural commodity and does not require a permit from ADPH to sell. If ingredients are added to the honey (such as cinnamon, butter, etc.), a permit then would be required.

**QUESTION:** Can home-roasted coffee be sold at craft fairs and farmers markets under the state's cottage food regulations? If not, what rules and regulations would selling such an item fall under? Would any special permitting be required to sell only at craft fairs?

**RESPONSE:** The rules for selling food at state-sanctioned farmers markets and selling food from a cottage food operation are a little different. The Cottage Food Law limits foods produced from a private home to only baked goods (such as cakes, cookies, etc.), candy, jams, jellies, dried herbs, and dried herb mixes. The items allowed to be made in a private home and sold at state-sanctioned farmers markets are limited to food items that do not require refrigeration. The cottage food operator is not limited to where they can sell (with the exception of internet sales) so long as they maintain control of their product until sold to the final consumer. The person selling at state-sanctioned farmers markets are limited to selling through that location only. A permitted food service establishment can sell anything, anywhere, to anybody. Food service establishments are permitted through the local county health departments.

**QUESTION:** Are there any regulations regarding black mold or any type of mold in apartment/housing units for rent?

**RESPONSE:** There are no regulations regarding mold of any type.

**QUESTION:** I'm considering residing in a yurt (a circular tent of felt or skins on a framework of poles, used by nomads of Mongolia). Yurts are not allowed in the city limits, but I wanted to find out what the county requires in the event I locate land to set up such a residence.

**RESPONSE:** The Bureau of Environmental Services regulates the installation of onsite sewage disposal systems for homes, but has no authority concerning the type of residence. I would check with the county commission in the county in which you want to place the yurt and obtain its definition for "residence." However, if you obtain permission to erect a yurt in the county, you must have proper sewage disposal which the bureau would then regulate.

**QUESTION:** I have a private well. I was informed by the previous owner that water was not safe for drinking and gardening, but I would like to be certain. Who does this kind of testing for potable water quality?

**ANSWER:** The Bureau of Clinical Laboratories tests water for bacterial coliform.

**QUESTION:** Are there any codes prohibiting service dogs at restaurants?

**ANSWER:** Below is the language from ADPH Food Rules specifically applying to service animals. The document is available on our website. This is adopted by reference from the recommendation of the U.S. FDA for nationwide standards for retail food establishments and is intended by FDA to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### FOOD CODE REQUIREMENTS

#### 6-501.115 Prohibiting Animals.

- (A) Except as specified in paragraphs (B) and (C) of this section, live animals may not be allowed on the PREMISES of a FOOD ESTABLISHMENT.
- (B) Live animals may be allowed in the following situations if the contamination of FOOD; clean EQUIPMENT, UTENSILS, and LINENS; and unwrapped SINGLE-SERVICE and SINGLE-USE ARTICLES can not result.
- (3) In areas that are not used for food preparation and that are usually open for customers, such as dining and sales areas, service animals that are controlled by the disabled employee or person, if a health or safety hazard will not result from the presence or activities of the service animal.

The Governor's Office on Disability also provides information concerning the legal allowances and limitations for service animals in any public setting.

**QUESTION:** Do I need a food permit just to serve coffee?

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# Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to [Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us) for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

**Lillian Bowden**  
**Linda Butler**  
**Teresa Latham**  
**Eliesabeth Lindsey**  
**Angela Parker**  
**Jorie Scott**  
 Health Provider Standards  
*from Beth Anerton, R.N.,  
 N.H.A.  
 Florence, Ala.*

**Georgette Blackmon**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Andres Reynoso  
 Wilmer, Ala.*

**Sandra Blakely**  
 Distance Learning  
 and Telehealth  
*from Debra Robbins  
 Montgomery, Ala.*

**Center for Emergency  
 Preparedness Logistics  
 Team**  
*from Rita Maynard  
 Montgomery, Ala.*

**Kathie Cleckler**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Celeste Childs  
 Huntsville, Ala.  
 Anita Stanton  
 Brandon, Miss.*

**Phyllis Cleveland**  
 Center for Emergency  
 Preparedness  
*from Aretha Bracy  
 Montgomery, Ala.*  
**Beverly Edwards**  
 Emergency  
 Medical Services  
*from Captain William Ward  
 Center Point, Ala.*

**Jackie Esty**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Greg O'Shea  
 Semmes, Ala.*

**Georgia Reynolds**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*Unlisted by request  
 Shaun Sparks  
 Belvidere, Tenn.*

**Gary Gibson**  
 Facilities Management  
*from Wade Rendelman  
 Enterprise, Ala.*

**Trista Gillespie**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Ruby Bester  
 Ohio*

**Jamie Gray**  
 Emergency  
 Medical Services  
*from Chief Eugene Tyler  
 North Shelby Fire  
 Birmingham, Ala.*

**Porsha Jackson**  
**Darwina Johnson**  
**Jessica Jones**  
**Regina Patterson**  
 Information Technology  
*from Jennifer Sumner  
 Health Marketing Division*

**Tim Hatch**  
 Center for Emergency  
 Preparedness  
*from Angela Kennedy  
 Montgomery, Ala.*

**Casandra Henderson**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Ernest Payne Reaves  
 LaGrange, Ga.*

**William Kennedy**  
 Clinical Management  
 and Practice  
*from Joyce Box  
 Guntersville, Ala.  
 Blake Pierce  
 Montgomery, Ala.*

**Patty Leonard**  
 Shelby County  
 Health Department  
*from Charlie Cook  
 Address unlisted*

**Nicole Rushing**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Cathy Leslie  
 Greenville, S.C.*

**Joan Styres**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Angela  
 (last name unavailable)  
 Montgomery, Ala.*

**Valeta Jones**  
**Kembley Thomas**  
 Emergency  
 Medical Services  
*from Dolly Albritton  
 Camden, Ala.*

**Video Production Staff**  
 Distance Learning and  
 Telehealth Division  
*from Debra Hodges, Ph.D.  
 Montgomery, Ala.*

**Delano Williams**  
 Center for Health Statistics  
*from Jim Robinson  
 New York*

## Environmental, continued from page 10

**ANSWER:** There is a provision in the Food Code that allows for businesses to serve coffee without having to obtain a food permit. There are stipulations such as the use of single service articles, etc. The intent of this provision is so that those businesses who wish to offer their employees or customers a very common low-risk item - coffee - can do so without having to meet the standards permitting would require. The best course of action would be to contact the supervisor at your county health department and describe your plan so it can be assessed and you can receive the appropriate guidance.

**QUESTION:** I am looking to open a bakery and trying to build up my appliances. When it comes to storage containers for dry goods such as flour, sugar, and baking soda, can I use any container as long as it's BPA free?

**ANSWER:** Items for storing foods such as the ones you have described must be considered food grade the manufacturer, smooth and easily cleanable. Restaurants and other food establishments are permitted by the local county health departments. So, it may be best to contact your local health department for more specific guidance on opening a bakery.

# Jefferson County Department of Health Celebrates 100 Years of Service in 2017

The Jefferson County Department of Health (JCDH) is celebrating 100 years of service to the community during 2017. Public Health Week was the kickoff for the celebration, which began with a news conference March 31. Various branding efforts and new ways for Jefferson County residents to access programs and services were unveiled. Health Officer Dr. Mark Wilson and JCDH retiree Pat Wise also took a look back into a few pivotal moments in JCDH history.

On April 1, the public was invited to JCDH Community Health Day at Railroad Park. During this event, JCDH and more than 60 partner agencies provided health screenings, educational health information, and insight to various services and programs offered by JCDH. Other local resources to promote healthy lifestyles were shared, including exercise programs, collaborative activities, fun and games for children, entertainment and more for the entire family to enjoy.



**Mark E. Wilson, M.D.**

Dr. Wilson presented his annual State of Health in Jefferson County address on April 5 at the UAB Hill Student Center. During this special occasion, JCDH honored the United Way of Central Alabama and the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham with the 2017 Public Health Week Community Champion Award for their remarkable public health contributions to Jefferson County and its residents.

As the year progresses, JCDH will engage in other activities, programs and events to continue 100-year festivities.

## **Remarks by Mark E. Wilson, M.D. Jefferson County Health Officer**

This is a pivotal and exciting time at JCDH. On this 100th anniversary of our local health department, it is interesting to look back at all the health challenges of the last century, and how those challenges were successfully met by the many public health heroes who went before us. It provides inspiration as we look forward, and as we launch our new strategic plan.

We spent much of 2016 gathering input from our community health assessment and other health data, our community health improvement plan, guidance from PHAB standards, and input from our staff, board of health and other stakeholders, and forging that into a set of four major priority areas for our strategic plan:

- 1) Expanding or improving the scope and impact of our services.
- 2) Improving our overall visibility, outreach and accessibility.
- 3) Ensuring ongoing development of a competent, skilled and motivated workforce.
- 4) Equipping our workforce with technology and tools to help them be more effective in their work.

We are facing an evolving set of public health challenges going forward, and we have an ambitious plan to address them. Particular areas of need where we are focusing new enhanced efforts include the following:

- 1) Chronic disease management.
- 2) Infectious diseases, especially HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis C.
- 3) Improving birth outcomes and infant health and development.
- 4) Mental health and substance abuse.

As in the past but more than ever, we will continue to partner with others in our diverse communities to achieve better health for all.



# Mobile County Health Department Cannon Team Marks Anniversary

The Mobile County Health Department's (MCHD) Cannon Team reached a major milestone. It was one year ago that the squad debuted its own cannon during the Dragon Boat Race at USS Alabama Battleship Memorial Park.

It was in 2016 that Dr. Bernard H. Eichold II, Health Officer for Mobile County, started an initiative called "Declaring War on Physical Inactivity." He points out that Alabama has one of the highest percentages of obesity in America.

In an effort to encourage local residents to go outside and enjoy our beautiful surroundings while exercising, Dr. Eichold arranged to borrow a Civil War re-enactment cannon to serve as the "starting gun" for the Azalea Trail Run that year. The response was so positive that Dr. Eichold acquired funds to purchase our own weapon to battle obesity.

The Lyle Line-Throwing Cannon, which has a 2.5-inch-diameter barrel, was manufactured in the early 1900s by Coston. It is not a replica, reproduction or toy. The cannon was designed to fire a projectile attached to a rope to a boat or a victim in distress. Now it used to inspire those seeking a healthier lifestyle.

The Dragon Boat Race raises money for the Fuse Project, which supports numerous causes promoting health, fitness, education and social responsibility of local children in Mobile and Baldwin counties. At the start of Saturday's races, organizers said they were



**Shown, left to right, are Cannon Team members Kelly Warren, Health Officer Dr. Bernard H. Eichold II, James Currie, Tim Busby, Edward Franklin and Jerry Folse. The organizers estimated 10,000 people attended the event, and raised more than \$200,000 for youth programs in Mobile and Baldwin counties.**

very close to reaching this year's goal of \$200,000.

A team of MCHD employees has been trained to safely use the device. Present with Dr. Eichold were Kelly Warren, Jerry Folse, James Currie, Tim Busby and Edward Franklin.

Following the National Anthem, a flyover of vintage fighter planes filled the sky. This was the cue for the MCHD cannon team, which responded at that precise moment to start the competitors march toward the dock.

*By Mark Bryant*

## Disease Intervention Specialist Speaks on Risks of 'Hooking Up' Through Social Media

Health students at Prattville High School were educated about the risks associated with the use of social media and the role it plays in "hooking up" with people they don't know.

Disease Intervention Specialist Emilio Rodriguez with Public Health Area 8, Bureau of Communicable Disease, Montgomery, addressed the students on April 17.

Rodriguez presented the most recent statistics of risky behaviors among Alabama high school teens aged 14-19 along with the current STD rates in Montgomery and the overflow to the surrounding counties. Concluding the presentation, he discussed responsible

decision making with the students and provided an overview of available services offered by county health departments.

Claudia Baugh, billing clerk for the Autauga County Health Department, placed a post about his presentation on the Autauga and Montgomery counties' Facebook pages, and she encourages others to "like" the pages. She provided contact information about the department as well.



**Emilio Rodriguez**



## Alabama Statewide Cancer Registry Receives Awards

The North American Association of Central Cancer Registries (NAACCR) and the National Program of Cancer Registries (NPCR) have awarded the highest Gold Certification to the Alabama Statewide Cancer Registry (ASCR) for its 2014 data submission. Obtaining such recognition signifies data submitted is complete, accurate, and timely. NPCR also awarded the registry the “Key to Cancer Control” in recognition of its ability to provide complete and timely data in 2016. Critical and high-quality data provided by the registry is included in the official federal statistics on cancer incidence and mortality, U.S. Cancer Statistics (USCS).

Data collected enables public health professionals to understand and address the cancer burden more effectively. USCS data are used to assess the cancer burden, inform and evaluate prevention efforts, and address disparities. USCS is produced annually by CDC and the National Cancer Institute.

Program Director Tara Freeman said, “It is a great honor for us to receive this recognition. It could not have been done without a great staff and the wonderful facilities that report timely, complete, and accurate data. It is so important to collect this data and have it used to change the lives of so many affected by the disease.”

ASCR is a statewide, population-based cancer registry which collects data on all cancer cases diagnosed or

treated in Alabama. The department established ASCR in 1995 in response to a state law (Act 95-275) that made cancer a reportable condition. Data collection began on January 1, 1996. ASCR is located within the Bureau of Family Health Services.



**PHOTO CAPTION:** Seated, left to right are Cassandra Reynolds and Tara Freeman. Standing are Melissa McNeil, Elaine Wooden, Crystal Jones, Kelsey Thomas, Angela Gaston-Murray and Justin George. Not pictured are Kandice Abernathy, Mark Jackson, Diane Hadley and Nyles Davis.

## Morgan County Health Department Holds Ribbon-cutting

State and local officials, architects, retired employees, and staff gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration at the Morgan County Health Department in Decatur on May 31. The department serves about 30,000 patients and clients per year, and even more can be served with the new state-of-the-art facility.





# May 12 was 'A Great Day for a Walk' at the Capitol

May is Physical Fitness and Sports Month, and May 12 was the date of the annual Alabama Employee Health and Fitness Fun Walk at the State Capitol. The theme for 2017 was "It's a Great Day for a Walk."

The noncompetitive walk is designed to encourage employees to get up and move throughout the work day as part of living an active lifestyle.

"Getting regular physical activity can improve your health and mood. Walking during breaks and lunch is a great way to fit in the recommended 30 minutes of aerobic activity every day. Many of us live busy lives and this event at the Capitol reminds us that not only can this be done, but we can find opportunities to be more physically active if we look for them," Laurie Eldridge-Auffant, Alabama Disability and Health Program Director, said.

The event is co-sponsored by ADPH, the Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports, the Alabama State Employees' Insurance Board (SEIB) and the ASF Foundation. Event co-sponsors weighed in on the reasons for supporting this annual event.

"The State Employees' Insurance Board is once again excited to be a sponsor of the 2017 Employee Health and Fitness Day," Tonya Campbell, SEIB marketing director, stated. "The goal of this event is to encourage physical activity in the workplace and promote healthy habits, goals that are reflected in the SEIB wellness program. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in an event that positively impacts the lives of state employees."

Anthony Terling, Vice President for External Affairs, ASF Foundation, said, "Our four main focuses at the ASF Foundation are to promote health, academics, good citizenship, and athletics. The fitness walk event is another way we are teaming up to promote healthy lifestyles to Alabama citizens. We are thankful and excited to work with such great partners. We can all make a larger impact working together, rather than working alone."

"Our main focus is to encourage and promote all types of physical fitness for all residents of Alabama," Phil Holmes, acting executive director of the Governor's Commission, said. "It's always great to see the number of state employees that participate in this event each year, proving that physical fitness is not only fun but a key component to living a healthy life."



**Norlishia Lampley and Bronett Terrell of the Bureau of Family Health Services prepare for the fitness walk.**





# Communication

## What is “Effective Communication”?

Effective communication is essential to managing workplace stress and conflict and to interact well with others.

### Active Listening:

Active listening involves giving your full attention to the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of the speaker and responding in ways that show you hear and understand what is being said.

### Components of Active Listening:

1. Understand what the speaker wants to say by:
  - Listening carefully while the other person is speaking.
  - Eliminating interruptions (For example, turning off your cell phone).
  - Avoiding multitasking during the conversation.
  - Allowing enough time for the discussion.
2. Encouraging the speaker to express him or herself by:
  - Making eye contact when he or she is speaking.
  - Not interrupting.
  - Leaning your body slightly forward to show interest.
  - Nodding your head slightly to acknowledge understanding and repeat what you heard.
  - Saying “Yes,” “I see,” and “Go on” to encourage him or her to keep speaking.
  - Not thinking about what you want to say while the other person is still speaking.

*“Speak clearly, if you speak at all; carve every word before you let it fall.” Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.*



# Calendar of Events

## July 24

Service Animals in  
Clinic Settings, 2-3 p.m.



For more information, contact the  
Distance Learning and Telehealth Division,  
(334) 206-5618.

## July 26

Infection Control, 2-3:30 p.m.



For more information, contact the  
Distance Learning and Telehealth Division,  
(334) 206-5618.

## August 4

“Closing the Gaps in Women’s Health: An  
Interprofessional Conference for Health Care  
Providers,” Tenth Annual Women’s Health  
Update Conference, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Bruno  
Conference Center, Birmingham.

## August 18

2017 Newborn Screening Conference, Embassy  
Suites Montgomery Hotel and Conference Center,  
300 Tallapoosa St., Montgomery. For more  
information, visit <http://www.southalabama.edu/departments/globalusa/cce/alnewbornscreening/>.

## August 24

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m.



For more information, contact the  
Distance Learning and Telehealth Division,  
(334) 206-5618.

## August 29

Infants and Birth Defects  
Linked to Zika Virus, time TBD.  
For more information, contact the  
Distance Learning and Telehealth Division,  
(334) 206-5618.



## November 17

Diabetes, Cardiovascular, and Obesity  
Conference, Alabama Cattlemen’s Association,  
600 Adams Ave., Montgomery.

For more information, contact Debra Griffin,  
Chronic Disease Division, (334) 206-2066.