Southern Miss Social Work Student Helps Nursing Home Residents Find Harmony

By Hanna Knowles

Brady Leatherwood, a senior social work major at The University of Southern Mississippi, is helping nursing home residents with dementia find joy and rediscover their memories.

Leatherwood and her adviser Karen Aderer, an instructor in the School of Social Work, make weekly visits to residents at the Driftwood Nursing Center in Gulfport, Miss. During the visits they apply individualized music intervention ideally 30 minutes before sundowning, the most agitated period for a person with dementia.

“The music needs to apply to their memory, it is not generalized music,” says Leatherwood. “We attempt to figure out what music they like by asking nursing home staff, family members and observing how they initially react to music.”

While listening to their personalized playlists, residents relax and become more social. A song connected to a past experience can trigger lost memories.

“The Finding Harmony project is really about connecting generations and optimizing the last years of their life. It’s really gratifying,” said Leatherwood.

Southern Miss Students Support Spread the Word to End the Word Campaign

By Nikki Smith

Graduate students in the Speech-Language Pathology program at Southern Miss recently took part in Special Olympics’ annual “Spread the Word to End the Word” campaign by participating in a pledge drive.

“This campaign asks people to pledge to stop saying the R-word as a starting point toward creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people,” said graduate student Victoria Miller.

According to r-word.org, the campaign is meant to engage schools, organizations and communities to pledge to use respectful and inclusive language and refrain from use of the “r” word.

“It amazes me that the awareness is not as much as it could be…so we wanted to spread awareness of the “r” word and get other people to know what it means,” said Miller. “I hope to hear the word less around the campus.”

Rosa’s Law removed the term mental retardation and replaced it with intellectual disability in federal health, education and labor policy. Special Olympics and Best Buddies have updated their terminology to people-first language that promotes inclusiveness and acceptance of those with intellectual disabilities.

For more information or to make a pledge, visit www.r-word.org.

College of Health Newsletter

March 2014

School of Social Work

Diversity Dash – 5K Run/Walk/Roll
“Educate the World/Celebrate Diversity”
April 12, 2014 – 10 am Centennial Lawn
For registration and more information

College of Health Spring Forum

"Hattiesburg’s Midtown: Health-Enhancing Economic and Community Development"
April 15, 2014
12 noon - 2 p.m.
http://www.usm.edu/health/calendar

Alumni Spotlight

Hannah Rice graduated from Southern Miss in December 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science. A member of the Honors College, Hannah received a summa cum laude distinction. Her honors thesis on the use of three key tumor markers in the diagnosis of prostate cancer received awards from the Mississippi Academy of Sciences and the Southern Miss Honors College. Hannah was recently awarded the A. Wallace Conerly Scholarship from the University of Mississippi Medical College, which is awarded to a maximum of two MD/PhD students each year. Hannah is deciding between pursuing a graduate degree in Microbiology or Physiology. If she chooses to study microbiology, she will likely specialize in infectious diseases, and if she chooses physiology, she would like to specialize in emergency medicine.

Dean’s Blog:
Click here to see updated posts from Dr. Michael Forster.
Lott, Knowles Receive Recognition as Public Relations Students to Watch

College of Health communications specialists Catherine Lott and Hanna Knowles have been included in a national list of 17 Public Relations Students to Watch as compiled by public relations expert Arik Hanson.

Each year Hanson spotlights what he deems to be the next generation of PR professionals. His list is based upon nominations made by professors at universities across the country.

Lott currently works full time as the communications coordinator for the DuBard School for Language Disorders at Southern Miss. She is responsible for developing the School’s entire internal and external communications plan including public relations, advertising, marketing, event planning and more.

Lott is pursuing a master’s degree in public relations at Southern Miss.

Knowles currently works as marketing communications officer in the School of Human Performance and Recreation at Southern Miss and assistant to the Dean of the College of Health, Dr. Mike Forster. She is also pursuing a master’s degree in public relations at Southern Miss.

Discounted Professional Development Opportunity for Coast Teachers

By Catherine Lott

The DuBard School for Language Disorders at The University of Southern Mississippi is bringing a popular professional development course for general and special education teachers, speech-language pathologists and reading specialists to the Mississippi Gulf Coast – Missing Links in Academics.

This course, typically offered for $300, is available to coast professionals for only $50, thanks to a grant provided by the Bacot-McCarty Foundation.

The program covers multisensory techniques for teaching the National Reading Panel’s five areas of reading, syllable types and syllable division rules, and the use of morphemes as a way of increasing vocabulary knowledge.

The course will take place April 1-2 at the Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College Jefferson Davis Campus. Professionals from the Biloxi Diocese, Bay St. Louis, Biloxi, George, Gulfport, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Moss Point, Pascagoula, Picayune, Pearl River, Poplarville and Stone school districts are invited to participate.

Those interested in participating can learn more information and register online at www.usm.edu/dubard-training or call 601.266.5223.

Department of Nutrition and Food Systems Hosts Service Learning Group

By Hanna Knowles

The University of Southern Mississippi’s Department of Nutrition and Food Systems recently hosted a group of college students from St. Norbert College in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

The trip was part of St. Norbert’s T.R.I.P.S. (Turning Responsibility into Powerful Service) program. This is the second year the service outreach program visited the department. Their initial visit was inspired by research published by the College of Health and an article highlighting its influence in the state’s fight against obesity.

The students wanted to learn firsthand about the health initiatives taking place in Hattiesburg and the university.

LaShaundrea Crook, a research dietitian in the Department of Nutrition and Food Systems, spoke to this year’s group.

“Those interested in participating can learn more information and register online at www.usm.edu/dubard-training or call 601.266.5223.

The 2013 College of Health Annual Report is available online at http://www.usm.edu/health/annual-report-e-newsletter