

## ST. MARY'S RECOGNIZES 2016 EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

*"We are an important part of our kids lives, if you're going to be here, then be the best for them"*

- Rita Byrd, 2016 employee of the year

St. Mary's campus is filled with loving individuals who have chosen a career devoted to caring for children and adults with developmental disabilities. It is a job that isn't always easy, but if you ask St. Mary's 2016 Employee of The Year, Rita Byrd, the rewards always out-weigh the challenges. Rita is a 26 year veteran at St. Mary's. She is currently a shift supervisor for dorm 700 which houses older boys on St. Mary's campus.

"I take pride in what I do at St. Mary's," said Byrd, "and I try to pass that along to everyone who works with me. We are an important part of these kids' lives, so if you are going to be here then be the best for them."

Rita admits she has a no-nonsense approach to client care. Her stern, yet approachable demeanor makes Rita a remarkable mentor for her fellow co-workers.

"I tell all of my employees, I'll do anything I can to help you, but our kids are my number one priority. I don't mind being tough if it means making sure our clients are happy and safe," said Byrd.



## RESIDENTS RETURN HOME AFTER FLOOD CLEAN-UP



June 30th was move-in day for a group of St. Mary's residents who had to evacuate their group home due to flooding in April.

Jada, Amanda, Victoria and Wynonna are all happy to be back in their newly renovated

home. The girls were temporarily housed on St. Mary's main campus after the Sharon Smith Group Home received two feet of flood water inside. The flooding destroyed much of the furniture and required more than \$30,000 in repairs.

Your generous donations and insurance coverage helped St. Mary's make the restorations and return the girls to their home as quickly as possible.



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st. mary's

# profound Love

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## "I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM, WE ALL SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM!"

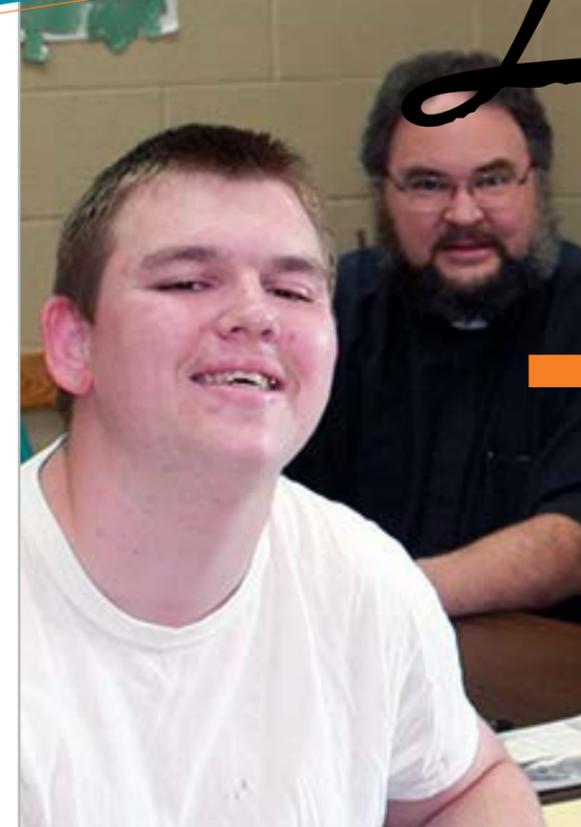


Red River Bank and Trust helped St. Mary's residents kick off the July 4th holiday. On June 30th, the bank partnered with St. Mary's by sending a custom ice cream truck to deliver frozen treats to residents and staff.

"We wanted to send out the Red River Bank ice cream truck to St. Mary's because it is a wonderful organization that does so much for their residents and we wanted to help put smiles on their faces," said Ben St. Romain, Red River Bank assistant vice-president.

Like many of you, Red River Bank shares a long commitment for caring for individuals born with severe to profound developmental disabilities. In addition to helping St. Mary's improve residents' quality of life through fun experiences, Red River has also partnered with St. Mary's through fundraising and grant opportunities.

If your business or organization would like to make an impact as well, contact us at 318-445-6443, ext. 2144.



"Do you know that Jesus loves you?"

It is a very simple question that one St. Mary's volunteer is making sure all our residents are confidently able to answer, 'Yes'.

Father David Braquet began coming to St. Mary's as a volunteer religion teacher this past spring. Each week, he holds classes to share God's love with children and young adults living with developmental disabilities. Teaching them fundamental stories from the bible, Fr. David says his inspiration is simply to share God's love with all His children.

"I wanted to be part of helping St. Mary's residents grow," said Fr. Braquet. "When I learned of St. Mary's need for religious education volunteers, I was more than happy to fill that role and hopefully make a difference in these kids lives by sharing God's love with them."

Fr. David is just one of many volunteers who help improve the quality of life for children and young adults with developmental disabilities at St. Mary's. Volunteers have always been important partners in our mission, helping St. Mary's continue increasing

## SHARING GOD'S GRACE: HOW ONE VOLUNTEER IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

the impact we make for those challenged with developmental disabilities.

This year, St. Mary's is working to expand that partnership by introducing the #ProfoundLoveProject. This updated venture will soon offer increased opportunities for you to make a difference in our community and invite others to make a difference with you.

"We are very blessed at St. Mary's to have so many people like Fr. David who choose to be a part of our mission. St. Mary's volunteer program is inspired by all of you, who in your special way, make a profound impact in the lives of our residents," said Tamara McNulty, St. Mary's director of development.

Volunteer opportunities range from various on-campus activities to social media groups who help promote St. Mary's mission online via social networks.

Learn more and find out where you fit in on our website at [www.stmarysalexandria.org](http://www.stmarysalexandria.org) or call St. Mary's development office at 318-445-6443 ext. 2144.

## MANAGERS' WISH LIST

Would you like to purchase a specific item to benefit the children of St. Mary's? Consider purchasing one or more gifts from our manager's wish list to improve the life of a child with special needs:

- 50 Cases of Bottled Drinking Water – Are you prepared in the event of an emergency? You can donate up to 50 cases of bottled water as part of St. Mary's disaster preparedness plan to help us ensure our residents' safety no matter the circumstances. **Total Cost = \$200**

- iPads – Apple's iPad has quickly become a go-to tool for children with developmental disabilities. Accessibility features as well as special education apps enhance the training experiences for special needs children. Improve St. Mary's Day Habilitation Program & ABA Learning Center by providing this device for our residents.

**Total Cost = \$350 each**

- Promethean Interactive White Board– Expand the training opportunities of St. Mary's Day Habilitation Program by providing state-of-the-art technology to help our kids grow. This interactive learning device stimulates all of the senses through site, sound & touch; helping children with developmental disabilities experience the world in a whole new way. **Total Cost = \$5,500**

- Behavior Analysis Training – Provide a professional development opportunity for one or more of our trainers. Each course will assist our staff in becoming an even stronger asset in the care of our children. **Total Cost = \$900 per person**



## CONTACT US

Physical address:  
6715 Highway 1 North  
Boyce, LA 71409

Mailing address:  
P.O. Drawer 7768  
Alexandria, LA 71306  
(318) 445-6443

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Stay up-to-date and sign up to receive our e-newsletter by visiting our website or on Facebook (facebook.com/StMarysRTS) visit our channel on YouTube.com/SaintMarysRTS or follow us on Twitter (twitter.com/st\_marys\_rts)!



## ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE

### "You are making the largest impact for individuals with developmental disabilities"

As I'm writing you, something very special is going on down the hall. A family is here visiting with St. Mary's team of professionals and wishing to find the services that their child with developmental disabilities needs to live a happy, healthy life.

I hope we can help them, but the truth is that even if we do offer the services their child requires, St. Mary's is now at 100% occupancy for the first time in more than 10 years. Families, like the one visiting down the hall, are being placed on a waiting list.

What does that mean for you and me?

It means that your support of St. Mary's is making the largest impact possible for individuals with developmental disabilities.



Hi! My name is Tim and I'm a graduate of St. Mary's Works Readiness Program.

As a young boy, Tim came to St. Mary's many years ago. He attended school with us. He participated in St. Mary's training

In fact, you are helping more children than ever before.

It also means that our work is far from over. St. Mary's mission must continue for the many more families in need of our services, like the one visiting with us today.

So far this year, you have helped St. Mary's welcome new training programs like our Day Habilitation Program which continues the learning process of residents who have aged out of the school system. I am also happy to share with you that St. Mary's long-awaited group home construction project is nearing reality. Our request to break ground has been submitted to receive its final blessing from the Vatican.



Thank you for being on this journey with us and continuing St. Mary's mission of caring for children with developmental disabilities. I hope you see that your commitment is making a difference each day.

With Many Blessings,  
Christi Guillot  
Administrator



St. Mary's residents pose with Louisiana Chef John Folse during this year's Greco Bowl.

The threat of an approaching tropical storm did not stop many of you from packing Hotel Bentley on July 21st for the reintroduction of Greco Bowl. Hosted by famed, Louisiana Chef John Folse, attendees enjoyed a superb meal created by Chef Folse and his team while giving back to children and young adults living with developmental disabilities.

"Chef Folse has been a great partner in our mission of caring for individuals with developmental disabilities," said Christi Guillot, St. Mary's administrator. "His

compassion for our children and personal generosity has helped us raise tens of thousands of dollars throughout the years with Greco Bowl."

This year was no different. Ticket sales, sponsorships, and silent auction purchases combined to bring in more than \$35,000 to support the training opportunities that help St. Mary's residents thrive and reach their fullest levels of independence.

"What most people don't realize about St. Mary's is while we are Medicaid funded, those dollars

## YOUR MEAL MAKING A DIFFERENCE: ANNUAL GRECO BOWL RETURNS TO ST. MARY'S

simply aren't enough to fund the training opportunities that make us special. Without the support of great people like Chef Folse, important opportunities like our Applied Behavior Analysis Learning Center, Works Readiness Program, or Day Habilitation Program wouldn't be possible," said Guillot.

You can learn more about St. Mary's special events like Greco Bowl on our website at [www.stmarysalexandria.org](http://www.stmarysalexandria.org). Sign up to join our email list and your meal can make a difference at our next Greco Bowl as well!



"I joined St. Mary's 'Be A Saint' monthly giving program for no better reason than it was the right thing to do. In my heart, I felt called to show support for people who were born with challenges that I wasn't afflicted with. Partnering with St. Mary's was an obvious choice to help me fulfill that calling. Their mission of caring for children born with developmental disabilities allows me to make an impact every month and share God's love with some of His most special children."

-Rebecca Alexander  
"Be A Saint" Program Participant

## MEET TIM!

### Your Support of St. Mary's Works Readiness Program helps residents like Tim make a difference!

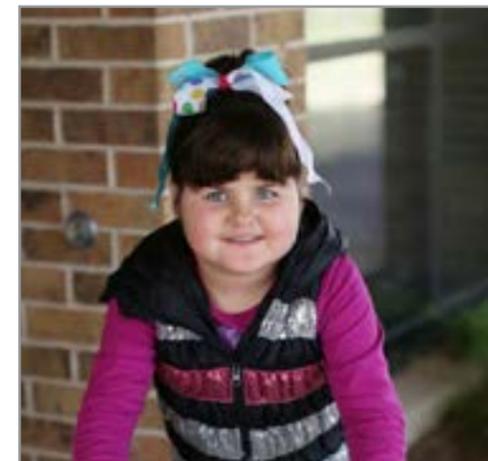
exercises. However, one of Tim's happiest achievements was getting his own job as a graduate of St. Mary's Works Readiness Program.

Designed to help young adults at St. Mary's continue their learning process, St. Mary's Work Readiness Program helps individuals like Tim learn valuable vocational skills. It allows those with disabilities the opportunity to make their own contributions to our community... helping them achieve a sense of fulfillment and purpose.

Tim has become an expert paper shredder in St. Mary's

administrative office. His role allows us to properly dispose of sensitive documentation and he has become a very valuable member of our team.

You are a valuable member of our team as well. Your support of St. Mary's benefits residents like Tim by ensuring activities like the Works Readiness Program are available. Together, we are meeting severe challenges with profound love and making a difference for individuals with special needs throughout Louisiana.



could make for her.

In just one year, I've watched Victoria grow tremendously. The one-on-one care that St. Mary's provides has helped her improve her behavior and communication skills. She's grown so much, that we're now optimistic that Victoria will be able to attend public school next year with her peers. For us, that is a great accomplishment.

Thank you to St. Mary's and everyone who supports their mission of caring for children like my daughter.

## HEART-TO-HEART

### "Thanks to St. Mary's training programs, I have watched Victoria grow."

It's not easy when doctors tell you that your child is going to need the kind of help that you can't provide in your home. In fact, it's heart breaking... But as Victoria's mom, I had to make the tough decision that would allow my baby girl to grow and flourish despite her developmental disability.

Victoria has been with St. Mary's for just over a year now. While it was difficult choice to make, it was the best decision I

~Susan  
Victoria's Mom



You can be a saint to a child with developmental disabilities. By joining St. Mary's 'Be A Saint' Giving Program you are making a difference for the more than 200 individuals living on our campus. Monthly gifts sustain our mission & ensure that the important programs & training opportunities that help residents can continue.

We couldn't make a difference without you.

Visit us online at [www.stmarysalexandria.org](http://www.stmarysalexandria.org) to schedule your recurring gift today. Donations are easy, secure and flexible.

Would you like to find out more? Contact St. Mary's development office at 318-445-6443 or at [tamara.mcnulty@stmarys-rts.org](mailto:tamara.mcnulty@stmarys-rts.org).