



# SMPDD

Southern Mississippi Planning & Development District

**BUILDING A STRONGER MISSISSIPPI**

## SMPDD OPENS NEW GULFPORT LOCATION



Southern Mississippi Planning & Development District (SMPDD) is excited to announce that the Gulfport, MS, offices will be moving into a new location in June. Over the years as we have expanded our programs, services and staff, we have outgrown our current offices. Our Medicaid Waiver office and our Highway 49 office will be combined into a 17,000 square foot facility. Our new spacious location will be easily accessible from the interstate and will allow us to maximize our ability to serve our clients.

The new SMPDD office will be located at 10441 Corporate Drive, Ste. 1, Gulfport, MS, 39503, and our contact numbers and email addresses will remain the same. During this transition period we will operate as normal with little interruption.

We invite everyone to stop by for a tour when you are in the area!



### SMPDD PROUDLY PARTNERS WITH THE GOVERNMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING COUNTIES:

Covington  
Forrest  
George  
Greene  
Hancock

Harrison  
Jackson  
Jefferson Davis  
Jones  
Lamar

Marion  
Pearl River  
Perry  
Stone  
Wayne

Busy, Busy, Busy, Mississippi Access to Care Program Specialists have been on the move throughout the counties, getting the word out on how MAC can assist individuals with resources and services. MAC Specialist were present this quarter at the following Health Fairs/Social Events: Mississippi Housing Authority's In-Service meetings, housing properties in Collins and Richton; two of Mississippi Housing Authority's Health Fairs at the Orange Grove Community Center in Harrison County and the National Guard Armory in Stone County. Two of the MAC Program Specialists were invited to speak at the Pinebelt Association for Families, a group of grandparents that are raising and/or helping to raise their grandchildren. Other Events included the NAACP Community Expo, Goodwill Industries Opening Ceremony and Job Fair at the Family Enrichment Center, Gaston Point and the Disability Awareness Day in Hattiesburg.

**Up-coming Events:** Wayne County Health Fair on May 11th, Lauderdale County Senior Health Fair on May 25th, the Gulfport Senior Summer BBQ on June 21st and the MML 87th Annual Conference on June 26th.

For the 2nd quarter of 2018, the Mississippi Access to Care (MAC) Center reports the following numbers:

**People:** 2350  
**By Phone:** 2354  
**By Email:** 248  
**By Fax:** 361  
**Walk-in:** 64  
**Other:** 19

## MIPPA IN THE COMMUNITY

The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) of 2008 is a multi-faceted piece of legislation related to Medicare. An important provision of MIPPA was the allocation of federal funding (through Section 119) for State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs), Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) to help low-income Medicare beneficiaries apply for programs that make Medicare affordable.

MIPPA grantees specifically help low-income seniors and persons with disabilities to apply for two programs that help pay for their Medicare costs:

- The Medicare Part D Extra Help/Low-Income Subsidy (LIS/Extra Help), which helps pay for the Part D premium and reduces the cost of prescriptions at the pharmacy.
- The Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs), which helps pay for Medicare Part B.

MIPPA grantees also provide Part D counseling to Medicare beneficiaries who live in rural areas and are tasked to promote Medicare's prevention and wellness benefits.

For fiscal year 2018, SMPDD is using its MIPPA funds to support LIS/MSP application assistance and preventative/wellness efforts in the form of community outreach support. SMPDD will work with its partners in the community to host outreach events in counties throughout our service area. The events have been coordinated with partners who have existing wellness programs in place and are in need of additional funding support.



### SMPDD will be participating in the following Wellness Outreach Events:

**Pearl River County** - The Senior Center of South Pearl River County will host their Third Annual Senior Games on May 17th and 18th at the El Patch Senior Center located at 45 El Patch Parkway in Picayune. This year's event will feature "Wellness Education" events and activities designed to teach and encourage seniors to develop healthy habits in their everyday lives. There will be a 1 mile run/walk and sprint run/walk. Horseshoes, corn hole, Wii bowling, team line dance, freestyle dancing, archery, bean bag baseball and darts are just some of the games featured. There will be a "Celebration of Athletes" luncheon May 18th at noon.

**Harrison County** – The Harrison County Board of Supervisors will be hosting a Senior Fun, Fishing & Recreation Day on May 24th, in the Lyman Community. The event will provide a large recreational area with covered pavilions for fishing clinics as well as booths for medical health partners to provide blood sugar, blood pressure and eye tests. The County will provide transportation for individuals from its senior centers to and from the event.

SMPDD will be present at all of these events providing counseling on Medicare, LIS/Extra Help, and Medicare Savings Programs and also conducting volunteer recruitment efforts for the SHIP program.

# DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN THE SCSEP PROGRAM?

Since 1963, Older Americans Month has been a time to celebrate older Americans, their stories and their contributions. Every May, the Administration on Aging, part of the Administration for Community Living, leads our nation's observance of Older American's Month. The 2018 theme, Engage at Every Age, emphasizes that you are never too old (or young) to take part in activities that can enrich your physical, mental and emotional well-being. It also celebrates the many ways in which older adults make a difference in our communities.

For many years, SMPDD has operated the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). The program is funded by Senior Service America and the Mississippi Department of Employment Services. It offers on-the-job training to older workers at non-profits and government agencies, with the intention of the individual gaining the necessary skills for full-time employment.

To be considered for eligibility, participants must be over the age of 55, have low income, cannot be currently working, and must live in either Covington, Forrest, George, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Jones, Lamar, Marion, Pearl River, Perry, Stone or Wayne Counties. If you know of someone that may be interested in participating in the SCSEP program, please refer them to SMPDD or kindly provide us with their name and phone number so that we may reach out to them.

Organizations wishing to serve as host agencies may also contact Jan Hale at (228) 868-2311 or [jhale@smpdd.com](mailto:jhale@smpdd.com).

## OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



ENGAGE AT EVERY AGE: MAY 2018

### SCSEP SPOTLIGHT



Mr. Richard Zorek came to Mississippi from the State of Kansas in 2012. During that time, he worked in retail management, owned an online thrift store, drove buses, installed cable lines and worked on an assembly line at a computer factory. Even with varied skills and work experience, Mr. Zorek found himself unemployed and at risk of homelessness at the age of 55. He sought help at his local WIN Job Center in Pearl River County in 2016 and was referred to SMPDD's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).

In July of that year, Mr. Zorek became a SCSEP participant and began serving the Mississippi Department of Human Service (DHS) office in Carriere. He worked the DHS assignment for a full year. SCSEP's

placement staff then referred him to a full-time job opening at Goodwill Industries in Picayune. With his skills and an excellent track record at DHS, Mr. Zorek was quickly hired and today remains a dedicated employee at Goodwill. In addition to his work as a small appliance repairman, he also finds time to volunteer at a local food bank in Picayune. Congratulations, Mr. Zorek and thank you to the employers and host agencies who are putting older Americans to work!

# Revolving Loan Fund Spotlight

Opening in May 2018, Finishline Performance Karting will provide a new family entertainment attraction featuring a high speed go kart track, an arcade, concession area and private party rooms. Located on the site of the former Slippery Sam's on Highway 90 in Biloxi, Finishline will offer two track options – a speed kart racing track for adults and a separate, smaller junior track for younger drivers. In addition to family entertainment use of the karts and track, there is a race circuit that runs in the fall and winter each year. The developers/owners of the track expect to see this race circuit incorporate their Biloxi track into multiple events and races. There are multiple high speed tracks around the country; however, Finishline will offer the only beachfront track in the nation. This location will likely draw thousands of fans to the Coast for these events.

SMPDD partnered with a local bank to provide financing to the developer for this investment. The loan was made with funds from the Revolving Loan Fund program through the Economic Development Administration. Finishline Performance Karting will be a great addition to the other family attractions on the Coast and they are scheduled to open on May 25th.

**For more information please visit:**

**Finishline Performance Karting**  
1782 Beach Blvd.  
Biloxi, MS 39531  
(504) 377-8221

**Like them on Facebook:**  
**@fpkarting**



## COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2018 - 2022



Southern Mississippi Planning & Development District

**BUILDING A STRONGER MISSISSIPPI**



Images from Google Earth, Chevron, Mississippi Power, Mississippi Works.

With Planning Grant Funding Provided by the:  
U.S. Department of Commerce and Economic Development Administration

March 2018

SMPDD recently completed its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, a five (5) year plan of action for the region. Based on a thorough analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the region, SMPDD formulated the following goals:

**Goal 1** - Be recognized as the premier region in Mississippi that thinks and works together regardless of geographic boundaries.

**Goal 2** - Create new jobs, additional wealth, and a better quality of life for the region by creating new and supporting established economic development programs.

**Goal 3** - Increase the growth and success of small business by creating and nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation.

**Goal 4** - Increase the opportunity for individuals to earn family-sustaining wages and meet the needs of employers by collaborating on and supporting workforce development strategies throughout the region.

The plan will be updated annually or as the need arises. The entire document can be viewed online at [www.smpdd.com](http://www.smpdd.com).

## SMPDD Hosts PLANNERS ON THE GULF COAST

On April 23, fifty (50) planners from across the country emerged on the Gulf Coast to get a glimpse of successful planning practices post-Katrina. SMPDD along with the City of Biloxi hosted the group, who traveled from New Orleans on a mobile workshop as part of the 2018 National Planning Conference. In Biloxi, the planners toured the MGM baseball stadium and downtown. The tour included a discussion on plans for a revitalized Howard Avenue and lunch at the beachfront Biloxi Visitors Center.



Leigh Jaunsen, an architect with Dale Partners Architects P.A. out of Jackson, toured visitors outside the Biloxi Shuckers Shop at MGM Park.  
Photo credit: Keith Wilson/THE BILOXI-D'IBERVILLE PRESS

# WHAT'S GOING ON IN LAUREL, MS?



Since the invention of the eight wheeled wagon in 1899 by the Laurel Machine and Foundry Company, Laurel has continued to grow businesses and a sense of community. There are now 1750+ businesses and a population of 18,500 in Laurel. As though that weren't impressive enough, in the past few years, downtown Laurel has taken on a life of its own.

With up to 30,000 cars traveling I-59 between Meridian and Hattiesburg each day, the Jones County

Chamber of Commerce has long recognized Laurel's potential to be a great tourist site and now it's finally happening. So what has caused Laurel to become a weekend destination place rather than just a quick stop for travelers? It is largely due to the huge success of HGTV's series "Home Town". The show highlights Erin and Ben Napier, owners of three businesses in downtown Laurel – Laurel Mercantile Company, Lucky Luxe, Scotsman Company-and their passion for renovating Laurel's historic houses. Though not featured on the show, the Napiers have also been involved in renovations for several downtown buildings. The change and growth in downtown Laurel is amazing. Mayor Johnny Magee attends each ribbon cutting and often says, "Each new business that opens in downtown Laurel is another piece of the puzzle of growth and success."

HGTV approached the Napiers about doing a program after following Erin on Instagram and liking the projects completed by the young couple. Though nervous about the project initially, Erin stated in *Country Living Magazine*, "Anything that can draw some positive attention to our town, we're game."

Both graduates of the University of Mississippi, neither have a degree related to renovations (Ben is a former youth minister and Erin has a degree in graphic design), just a strong love for all things old. "Home Town" is now in its second season on HGTV and is one of the network's more popular shows.

With filming set to begin this summer for season three of "Home Town", Laurel is embracing its newfound celebrity. As Erin has stated to *The Clarion-Ledger*, "You also don't have to leave your small town to make a really big difference. And that's what "Home Town" is really all about." A special thanks to the Napiers for making a big difference – Laurel is ready!



Erin & Ben Napier  
Photo credit: HGTV



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Elizabeth C. Ladner  
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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



## Making History in Gulfport

It never hurts to ask.....and that is exactly what the Gifted and Talented students at Pass Road Elementary decided to do to fix a problem on their own. These students have spent countless hours setting up walking tours and researching the history of the gravesites at the Mississippi City Cemetery in Gulfport, MS, with the help of SMPDD's GIS Department, the volunteer help of Ms. Pat Harvey and their teachers, but the cemetery did not have a sign for the location. The students reached out to Harrison County Supervisor, Angel Kibler-Middleton to ask if she would help them obtain a sign for this location and she helped their dream come true.



The Historic Mississippi City Cemetery is located at 293 32nd 1/2 St. Gulfport, MS

## SAVE THE DATES



**2018 MAS Annual Convention**  
June 11th - 14th  
MS Gulf Coast Convention Center  
Biloxi, MS



**2018 MML Annual Conference**  
June 25th - 27th  
MS Gulf Coast Convention Center  
Biloxi, MS



**2018 MEDC Annual Conference**  
July 11th - 13th  
IP Casino & Resort  
Biloxi, MS

SMPDD is an Equal Opportunity Employer; auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities

