



Central Update

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Central Mississippi Planning &
Development District

CMPDD Connects Jackson Public Schools Students with Nissan Internships

The Workforce Division is partnering with the Jackson Public School District and Nissan to provide hands-on internship opportunities for high school students interested in careers in advanced manufacturing and automotive service. This spring semester, 24 Jackson Public Schools (JPS) students are participating in internships at the Nissan manufacturing facility in Canton, gaining valuable real-world experience as they complete their final months of high school.

Students who completed a Career and Technical Education advanced manufacturing or automotive service program through Jackson Public Schools were eligible to apply for the internship. Of the students selected, 20 are participating in the advanced manufacturing track, while four (4) are gaining experience in the automotive service sector. The internships allow students to apply the technical skills they learned in the classroom while working in a professional manufacturing environment.

The program is designed to strengthen the local workforce pipeline while giving students a clear pathway into high-demand careers. By working directly with industry professionals, students are building practical skills, learning workplace expectations, and gaining a better understanding of career opportunities available in Mississippi's manufacturing sector.

All 24 students currently participating are on track to both graduate from high school and successfully complete the internship program. Their progress reflects the dedication of the students and the strong collaboration between education, workforce development, and industry partners.



This partnership demonstrates how collaboration between schools, workforce organizations, and employers can create meaningful opportunities for students while helping meet the workforce needs of key industries in central Mississippi.

CMPDD Staff Completes Safety Analysis Report

CMPDD staff recently completed development of the 2020-2024 Safety Analysis Report for the Jackson Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO's) planning area. Crash data analyzed by CMPDD staff was obtained from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

(NHTSA) and from data provided to the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) by the Mississippi Department of Public Safety (MDPS) covering a five-year planning period. The intent of the report is to provide a snapshot of the crash trends affecting users

of the transportation system in the Jackson MPO's planning area. The report not only looks at crash trends for the planning area as a whole but also includes a breakdown of the crash trends impacting each of the

(see *Safety* on p.3)

CMPDD Secures Workforce Grants to Expand Training and Apprenticeships

The workforce division of CMPDD has secured new grant funding that will expand workforce training and apprenticeship opportunities across the region.

The funding will support two (2) key initiatives designed to strengthen the regional workforce and help employers address ongoing labor shortages: the Industry Skills Grant and the Apprenticeship Grant. These programs will provide additional resources to prepare job seekers for in-demand careers while helping businesses develop a stronger talent pipeline.

Industry Skills Grant

The Industry Skills Grant will support targeted workforce training programs aligned with the needs of local industries while developing a pre-apprenticeship program for area high school students. CMPDD will partner with regional school districts, community colleges, and employers to deliver short-term programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials and incorporate meaningful work-based learning experiences. These pathways will also connect participants to both registered and non-registered apprenticeship programs.

Training will focus on high-demand sectors including advanced manufacturing, healthcare, construction and skilled trades, information technology, and transportation, distribution, and logistics. These programs are designed to help employers connect with emerging high school talent while providing students with the skills needed to enter the workforce and advance in high-demand careers.

Apprenticeship Grant

CMPDD has also received funding to expand registered apprenticeship opportunities throughout the region. Apprenticeship programs allow individuals to “earn while they learn” by combining paid on-the-job training with related classroom instruction.

Through this grant, CMPDD will work with employers to develop and expand apprenticeship programs that meet industry workforce needs while providing workers with nationally recognized credentials. These programs are increasingly being used across the country to address workforce shortages and create clear career pathways in skilled occupations.

Employers participating in the program will receive technical assistance and support in establishing or expanding their apprenticeship programs.

Strengthening the Regional Workforce

Together, the Industry Skills Grant and Apprenticeship Grant represent an important investment in workforce development across Central Mississippi. By expanding access to training and work-based learning opportunities, these programs will help residents build valuable skills while supporting the workforce needs of regional employers.

CMPDD will continue working with community colleges, training providers, economic development partners, and local businesses to ensure these initiatives support long-term economic growth and strengthen the region’s workforce.

Grant Updates

CDBG Grant Workshops

CMPDD Staff attended the CDBG Grant Implementation Workshop in Pearl on April 25th. The workshop, hosted by the Mississippi Development Authority, was a comprehensive walk through of requirements and resources for grant implementation and administration. CMPDD staff will be attending other grant-related workshops in the future to ensure we are well equipped to serve our member governments in their quest for grants.

DRA Distressed County Update

In March, CMPDD completed its annual update of DRA’s distressed county / census tract model. CMPDD has performed this work annually for DRA for over 15 years. The update requires extensive data collection and analysis to determine if the 255 counties in the DRA meet the established criteria

of a distressed county. Data sources for this project include Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis and American Community Survey for census tract analysis.

DRA Program Updates

DRA’s investments help improve basic public infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, job training, workforce development and economic development planning to support further economic development in communities across Mississippi. CMPDD staff are currently working with local municipalities and organizations on their applications to be submitted for the 2026 grant cycle. DRA will soon be accepting applications for the following grant programs: States Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP) and Critical Infrastructure Fund (CIF).

SEDAP awards are dedicated

to improving public infrastructure in distressed and non-distressed communities with an emphasis on job creation. These projects can apply for a maximum of \$500,000. CIF provides public infrastructure assistance for distressed and non-distressed counties and municipalities in the DRA region. These projects can apply for a maximum \$1,000,000 grant amount.

CMPDD continues administering previously awarded projects with the Town of Edwards, Town of Braxton, Mississippi Rural Water Association, Town of Georgetown, City of Raymond, Piney Woods School, Town of D’Lo, Metro Boomin, and the Public Service Commission of Yazoo City.

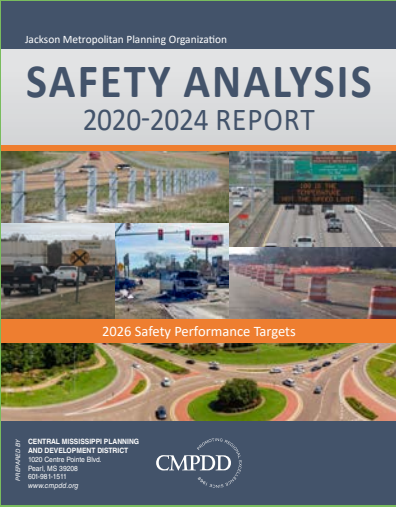
For more information regarding DRA’s programs and application dates for 2026, please contact Ally Ross at aross@cmpdd.org.

Hazard Mitigation Planning

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local jurisdictions to maintain an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to maintain grant eligibility for certain pre- and post-disaster grant programs available through the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). All jurisdictions are reminded to review their adopted Hazard Mitigation Plans annually to ensure accuracy with current visions and needs and to account for any development or population changes that might have occurred that could increase or decrease a community's risk to a particular hazard.

Predicting where the next disaster will occur, and how severe its impact will be on a community is difficult. Given the right conditions, natural disasters, such as tornadoes and flash floods, can occur at anytime and anyplace. Their human and financial consequences can be significant. Mitigation Planning is intended to assist communities in determining their risks to natural disasters and developing an action plan to address the known risks by lessening the impact of natural disasters when they do take place. Currently, CMPDD Planners are assisting Richland, Brandon, Florence, Flora, Clinton, Ridgeland, Rankin County, and Copiah County with a 5-year update to their Hazard Mitigation Plan. CMPDD planners will be reaching out to governments that have a Hazard Mitigation Plan expiring soon. CMPDD Planners remain available to assist local governments with their annual reviews.

Safety *(continued from p.1)*



three counties included in the planning area.

Crash statistics contained in the report include total number of crashes, total fatalities resulting from automobile crashes, total serious injuries resulting from a crash, total number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries resulting from a crash, crash types and crash time of day. The 2020-2024 Safety Analysis Report can be found on CMPDD's website at www.cmpdd.org/performance-measures/.

Planning Updates

CMPDD continues to provide comprehensive planning support to member jurisdictions across the region, with several major initiatives currently underway. These efforts reflect a shared commitment to proactive growth management, regulatory modernization, and the preservation of community character.

In the City of Brandon, CMPDD has been assisting with the development of a new Zoning Ordinance. This effort represents a full modernization of Brandon's regulatory framework and is intended to better align land use controls with current development patterns and long-term planning objectives. The draft ordinance has recently been shared for public review and will be considered for adoption next quarter.

CMPDD is also working closely with the City of Flowood on a Comprehensive Plan update. This initiative will establish a forward-looking policy framework to guide growth and development, with subsequent zoning ordinance amendments anticipated to ensure regulatory consistency with the adopted plan.

The City of Pearl is undergoing a Comprehensive Plan update. This process is focused on evaluating existing conditions, identifying emerging trends, and establishing a clear vision to guide future land use, infrastructure investment, and economic development.

In the City of Clinton, CMPDD is leading a Comprehensive Plan update that emphasizes robust public engagement. As part of this effort, residents are encouraged to participate in an online survey currently available through Clinton's official social media platforms. This input will play a critical role in shaping policy direction and ensuring that the plan reflects community priorities.

Finally, CMPDD is assisting the City of Madison with a Comprehensive Plan update. This effort is focused on maintaining Madison's high quality of life while addressing growth pressures and evolving development patterns.

Across all of these initiatives, a consistent theme has emerged: balancing growth with preservation. Each plan and regulatory update is tailored to the unique context of the community, with an emphasis on protecting established neighborhoods, reinforcing the existing built environment, and addressing specific local concerns driven by ongoing development trends. Through these coordinated efforts, CMPDD continues to support its member jurisdictions in implementing thoughtful, strategic planning practices that enhance livability and long-term sustainability throughout the region.

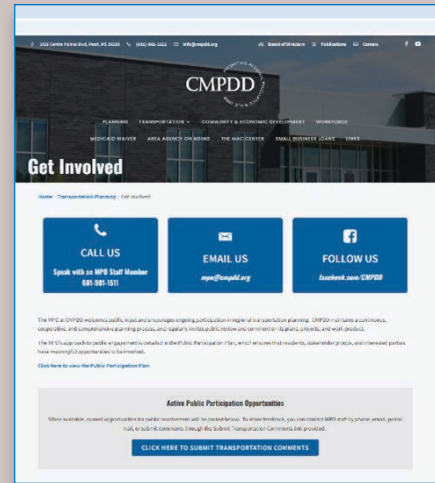
MPO Adopts an Updated Public Participation Plan

In February, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) adopted an updated Public Participation Plan. The Plan outlines the strategies and procedures the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD) uses to engage the public and transportation stakeholders throughout the planning process. These efforts include sharing information, gathering feedback, and providing multiple opportunities for meaningful participation in a manner that is accessible, transparent, and proactive.

Opportunities for public engagement such as in-person community meetings, surveys, and public comment periods will be posted on CMPDD’s website under the Transportation “Get Involved” page at www.cmpdd.org/get-involved/.

Comments or questions may also be submitted to the MPO at any time using the Transportation Comment button available on the “Get Involved” page. CMPDD encourages residents, community partners, and stakeholders to participate and provide input as transportation plans and projects are developed.

For more information about CMPDD’s transportation planning process visit www.cmpdd.org or contact CMPDD staff at mpe@cmpdd.org.



Jackson MPO Adopts Updated Safety Targets

Federal guidelines require Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and transit service providers to develop and implement a performance-based transportation planning and programming approach that evaluates the effectiveness of transportation funding investments in maintaining and improving the operability of the overall transportation system. Performance based planning is a data-driven evaluation method used by transportation decision makers to determine the effectiveness of existing transportation investments and inform decisions on future investments in order to meet a number of federally required transportation performance targets set for multiple performance measure areas. The transportation performance measure areas that are required to be evaluated include: safety, pavement conditions, bridge conditions, travel time re-liability, freight reliability, transit assets, and transit safety.

Of these performance measure areas, the safety performance measure is the only one that performance targets are required to be re-evaluated and updated annually per federal guidance. Under the safety performance area, MPOs and State DOTs are required to establish performance targets for five (5) safety performance measure areas based on a five-year rolling average of analyzed crash data. The five (5) safety performance measure areas targets are set for include: total fatalities, fatality rate, total serious injuries, serious injury rate, and total non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. MPO’s, per federal guidance, have the option to set their own safety performance targets or support targets set by their respective state DOT. On February 11th, 2026, the Jackson MPO voted to support the updated safety targets set by the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT).

SAFETY TARGETS

2026 State of Mississippi Safety Targets						
Measure	Target					
Number of Fatalities	726					
Rate of Fatalities per 100 million VMT	1.770					
Number of Serious Injuries	2,967					
Rate of Serious Injuries per 100 million VMT	7.240					
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	292					

State and MPO Safety Performance Trends						
Fatalities	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Average
Mississippi	748	766	703	737	697	730.2
CMPDD MPO	104	77	80	81	91	86.6

Fatality Rate	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Average
Mississippi	1.891	1.875	1.760	1.808	1.70	1.807
CMPDD MPO	2.028	1.479	1.569	1.563	1.727	1.673

Serious Injuries	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Average
Mississippi	3,616	3,519	3,344	3,205	3,834	3,515.0
CMPDD MPO	660	695	603	654	624	647.2

Serious Injury Rate	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Average
Mississippi	9.141	8.614	8.370	7.863	7.15	8.228
CMPDD MPO	12.868	13.352	11.824	12.619	11.840	12.501

Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	5-yr Average
Mississippi	324	295	290	285	280	294.8
CMPDD MPO	64	62	51	78	73	65.6

A Measure is a statement of what is being assessed, and a Target is a quantifiable level of performance or what you hope to achieve within an identified time period.

For more information about safety targets or the implementation of performance measures visit the MPO’s website, www.cmpdd.org/performance-measures/.

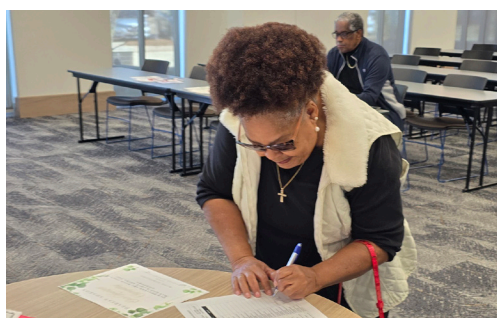
Supporting Caregivers: A Journey of Wellness, Connection, and Renewal

Over the past several months, our caregiver gatherings have centered on the message that caregivers need care too. Through meaningful discussions, practical resources, and shared encouragement, we have focused on helping caregivers support their loved ones while also prioritizing their own well-being. These conversations have created space for reflection, connection, and growth. This reminds the caregivers that they are not alone in their journey and self-care is important.

A recurring theme throughout these gatherings has been the idea of love in action. Caregivers were encouraged to view love not simply as a feeling, but as a daily practice demonstrated through setting boundaries, allowing time for rest, embracing honesty, and extending compassion to themselves as well as others. One of the most impactful reminders shared was that no one can continue pouring into others from an empty place. This message resonated deeply, reinforcing that self-care is not selfish but essential to providing healthy and sustainable care.

We also explored the connection between caregiving and overall wellness by sharing simple, realistic strategies for healthier living. Practical guidance included budget-friendly recipes, quick meal planning ideas, family favorites, and nutrition tips that benefit caregivers, grandparents, and their loved ones alike. By focusing on small, manageable changes, we emphasized that even modest steps can lead to meaningful improvements in daily health and overall quality of life.

In addition to these discussions, caregivers were invited to engage in deeper reflection through a book club centered on *The Conscious Caregiver: A Mindful Approach to Caring for Your Loved One Without Losing Yourself* by Linda Abbit. This resource has sparked thoughtful dialogue around mindful caregiving and caring for others without losing oneself in the process. The caregiver book club has inspired many personal and heartfelt conversations, proving to be both rewarding for participants and



facilitators. These meaningful exchanges continue to serve as a powerful reminder that no one is alone on this journey.

Together, these past few months have provided encouragement that is both heartfelt and practical. From emotional wellness and self-compassion to nutrition and mindfulness, each discussion has been designed to strengthen caregivers in ways that are both meaningful and applicable to everyday life. Our goal is for every participant to leave feeling seen, supported, and better equipped to manage the responsibilities they carry.

As we move forward, we remain committed to creating spaces where caregivers and grandparents can learn,

connect, and find renewal. Caregiving is a labor of love, but it should never come at the expense of the caregiver's own health and peace of mind. By continuing to offer encouragement, practical tools, and opportunities for reflection, we aim to remind every caregiver and grandparent that their role matters and that they matter too.

Our monthly caregiver support meetings are held for grandparents on the first Monday of each month and for caregivers on the third Monday. If you are interested in joining or would like more information about these support groups, please contact the Area Agency on Aging at 601-981-1516.

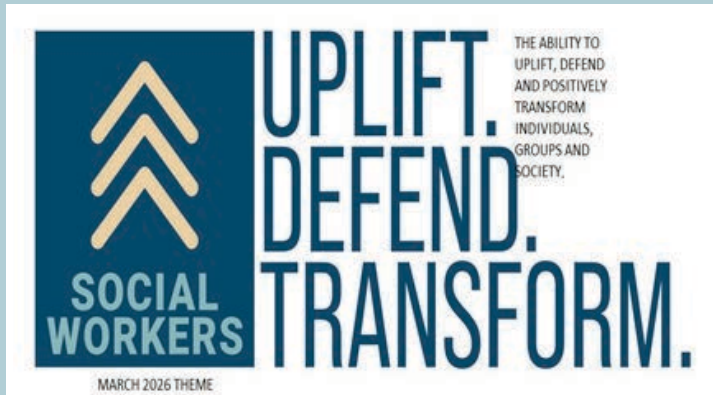
CMPDD's Medicaid Waiver Program Update

The Elderly & Disabled Medicaid Waiver (E&D Waiver) is a statewide program designed to provide in-home assistance to qualified Medicaid beneficiaries. Beneficiaries must be 21 years of age or older. They must qualify by either SSI Medicaid or 300% of SSI Medicaid. They must require assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing, dressing, eating, ambulation and/or transferring; or instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) such as laundry, light housekeeping, errands, and/or assistance on community outings. Registered Nurses (RN) and Licensed Social Workers (LSW) work together as a team to assess the referred client, submit for approval of services to the Division of Medicaid (DOM), then manage and coordinate the approved services for all clients.

If a beneficiary does not qualify for SSI Medicaid and is enrolled on any Waiver program, the monthly income limit for 2026 to qualify for Medicaid is \$2,982 (before deductions). The income limit is evaluated and adjusted accordingly each year. This year's income limit increased by \$81.00.

March 2026 is National Social Workers Month! We appreciate the service and dedication of CMPDD's 16 amazing Social Workers!

CMPDD's Waiver and Workforce Investment divisions continue partnerships to employ Social Workers who have received their bachelor's degree in social work, and are seeking to work as a licensed social worker case manager. The salary-based 12-week program provides dedicated study time, information, preparation for taking the licensure exam, and supervised observation of case management home visits. Trainees also receive the traditional benefits of insurance coverage, leave time accrual, and other employee benefits. At the end of the 12-week training period, and passing the licensure exam, the trainee will automatically transition to a permanent LSW Case Manager position.



*Individuals who own an agency and are seeking to become a Medicaid Waiver service provider should contact the Division of Medicaid, Long-Term Care Bureau at 601-359-6141.

For more information on Elderly & Disabled Waiver services, please contact CMPDD's Mississippi Access to Care (MAC) Center at 1-844-822-4622. Or contact Teresa Burrell-Shoto, RN, Case Management Director at 601-855-5914 or tburrell@cmpdd.org.

City Clerks and Central MS Mayors Association

In March, both the City Clerks and the Central MS Mayors Association (CMMA) met at CMPDD. These groups meet quarterly to share best practices and discuss issues at the municipality level. The next City Clerk and CMMA meetings will be held during the summer. This spring, CMMA awarded two (2) scholarships to local students who will be continuing their education in the state of Mississippi. These students have achieved academic excellence and have shown deep commitment to serving their communities. This year's winners were Kylie Sutphin of Richland, and Jack Durr of Pearl.



From left to right— Mayor LeKentric Caston, Mayor Clay Burns, Mayor John Henry Berry, Mayor Michael Arinder, Mayor Steve Singleton, Mayor Mark Grubbs, Mayor Trey Gunn, Mayor Jake Windham.

CMDC BULLETIN

Commissioner De'Keither Stamps, President of the Central Mississippi Development Company, Inc. (CMDC), announced an update on a prior SBA 504 Loan.

The approval was for Revival Property LB112, LLC, which will operate as The Hotel Whiskey Long Beach. The 27-room boutique hotel is near completion and is expected to open this summer. This will serve as the borrowers' second location along the Mississippi Gulf Coast and will create five (5) new jobs in the private sector.

CMDC is a commercial lender certified by the U. S. Small Business Administration and works with local banks and other financial institutions in providing debt capital for small businesses. CMDC provides fixed rate low interest long term financing for small businesses and saves thousands of dollars in debt service on fixed assets. This type of financing removes the problem of variable rate financing on long-term assets. Many economic forecasters are certain that interest rates will rise. These predictable interest rate increases will not negatively impact the cash flow of those small businesses that have fixed rate low interest loans through the U. S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 504 Loan Program. The

most recent fixed interest rates under this loan program were:

SBA 504 Loan Program Interest Rates

<u>TERM (YEARS)</u>	<u>INTEREST RATE</u>
10 (March 2026)	5.79%
20 (March 2026)	5.93%
25 (March 2026)	5.86%

Also, CMDC serves as the Loan Review Board for the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District's (CMPDD's) Minority Business Enterprise Loan Program (MBELP). MBELP receives its funding from the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). The interest rate on loans made through this program to a minority owned business is currently 5.50% per annum. The term of a loan can be up to 15 years depending on the use of the loan proceeds (commercial buildings, equipment, inventory, working capital, etc.)

Commissioner De'Keither Stamps invites bankers, commercial loan officers, business owners, real estate developers, and general contractors to contact Dwayne Perkins at 601-981-1625, or visit our website at www.cmpdd.org. See the tab labeled "Small Business Loans."

CDBG Grants

In the spring of 2026, five (5) municipalities were awarded 2025 CDBG grants to assist with improving public infrastructure. Mississippi's CDBG Public Facilities Program provides funding for public infrastructure needs. Eligible CDBG Public Facilities projects include improvements to water, wastewater and drainage systems, and streets.

- The Town of Braxton was awarded \$562,140.00 for critical road improvements. This funding will address critical deficiencies in Braxton's roadway system by repairing and resurfacing selected streets that have become hazardous due to severe cracking, poor drainage, and structural failure.
- The City of Crystal Springs was awarded \$646,669.73 for water improvements. This funding will cover costs to install new water lines that are properly sized to meet the needs of the Freetown Community. The lines will be relocated from beneath the roadway to the adjacent right-of-way, ensuring easier access and more reliable long-term service. In addition, new fire hydrants will be installed to enhance public safety.
- The Town of Edwards was awarded \$556,250.00 for town wide drainage improvements. This project will address the flooding issues in the Town of Edwards by improving stormwater infrastructure in critical areas.
- The Town of Pelahatchie was awarded \$599,400.00 for critical wastewater improvements. The project will rehabilitate and upgrade multiple pump stations throughout the Town of Pelahatchie's wastewater collection system.
- The Town of Terry was awarded \$600,000.00 for critical wastewater improvements to the town's lagoon. This project will include the installation of four new paddle wheel aerators to increase oxygenation in the lagoon, aiding in the reduction of biochemical oxygen demand and total suspended solids.

CMPDD staff continue to administer previously awarded projects with Warren County, Madison County, City of Byram, Town of Flora, Town of Georgetown, City of Hazlehurst, City of Brandon, Town of Utica and the City of Raymond. CMPDD staff continue to work with municipalities on their new 2026 CDBG applications.

If the name and address of the recipient needs to be updated, please contact our office at 601-981-1511.

CMPDD Celebrates National Nutrition Month “Discover The Power of Nutrition”

The Central Planning and Development District/Area Agency on Aging proudly recognized the month of March by highlighting an essential pillar of senior well-being and healthy nutrition. This year’s theme, “Discover the Power of Nutrition,” emphasized the importance of making informed, sustainable choices that support overall health. Through partnerships with local farmers, Bradford Farms and FootPrint Farms, seniors received fresh vegetable and fruit boxes designed to promote balanced diets and encourage healthier lifestyles.

These efforts complement CMPDD’s ongoing weekly meal services provided through Trio Community Meals, LLC, ensuring seniors have consistent access to nutritious meals. Participants also had the opportunity to attend an engaging live food demonstration led by Chef Mario Reyes. This interactive session provided practical, easy-to-follow tips for preparing wholesome and flavorful meals at home, empowering seniors to make healthier choices in their daily routines.

Beyond nutrition, CMPDD remains committed to holistic wellness by offering a variety of preventive health programs. Seniors actively participate in initiatives such as Bingocize and Walk with Ease, each designed to improve physical fitness, support cognitive



function, and enhance the overall quality of life. Participants also benefit from guidance provided by a Nutrition Education Counselor, along with access to valuable health resources, educational materials, and community information.

Equally important is the strong sense of community fostered at congregate sites. Seniors gather in welcoming environments filled with laughter, meaningful activities, and nourishing meals. These social interactions play a vital role in strengthening cognitive and social skills while helping to reduce isolation.

Through these comprehensive efforts, the Area Agency on Aging continues to empower seniors to lead healthier, more active, and connected lives, demonstrating that nutrition, education, and community are key ingredients for aging well.



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