

## The Getting Ahead Curriculum Focuses on Resources Important to Each of Us



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## New Faces at CCMC

We have a couple of new faces on staff we would like to introduce to you. They may be familiar faces to many...but we wanted to share information about them with you as we welcome them to CCMC!

Both staff members will be focused on Getting Ahead, a process that helps individuals in poverty build resources for a more prosperous life for them-selves, their family, and their community. CCMC initiated Getting Ahead Hot Springs in 2015. Participants in Getting Ahead are guided through an assessment of their own resources and how to build those resources as part of their move to self-sufficiency.



**Starla Bleifus** is the new Getting Ahead Program Coordinator and started at CCMC on June 19th.

She has lived in Arkansas most of her life and in Hot Springs for the past 19 years. She graduated from Southern Arkansas University in 1988 with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Ed/Special Ed.

She recently retired from Fountain Lake Schools where she taught for the past 19 years. Previous to that, she taught for 10 years in Stamps, Arkansas.

Starla and her husband have two grown sons and a new daughter-in-law. She says she enjoys working with and helping others and is very excited about joining in the work being done at CCMC!



**Michelle Ratcliff** is the new Getting Ahead Mentor Coordinator. She will be recruiting community members to serve as GA mentors and will be available as a liaison for the Getting Ahead mentors. Mentorships are an important piece of this process as it provides the continuation of support and contact for the participant after graduation.

She is originally from Louisiana and graduated from Louisiana Tech University, in 1989, with a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources Management. She formerly worked as the personnel manager for Continue Care Home Health in Greenville, Mississippi. After moving to Hot Springs, she and her husband owned Lawn Doctor of Hot Springs from 1998 to March, 2015. They currently own and operate a land and property investment company.

Michelle is very involved in the Hot Springs community and volunteers and serves on a number of non-profit boards such as Hot Springs National Park Rotary Club, Ouachita Children's Center, United Way of the Ouachita's, Leadership Hot Springs, and Hot Springs Future Fund. She is currently the Hot Springs Chamber Woman of the Year and Rotarian of the Year for the Hot Springs National Park Rotary Club.

To learn more about this program, contact Starla Bleifus at [sbleifus@ccmchs.com](mailto:sbleifus@ccmchs.com) or call 501.318.1153, ext. 301

Michelle Ratcliff can be reached at [mratcliff@ccmchs.com](mailto:mratcliff@ccmchs.com) or call 501.318.1153, ext. 102

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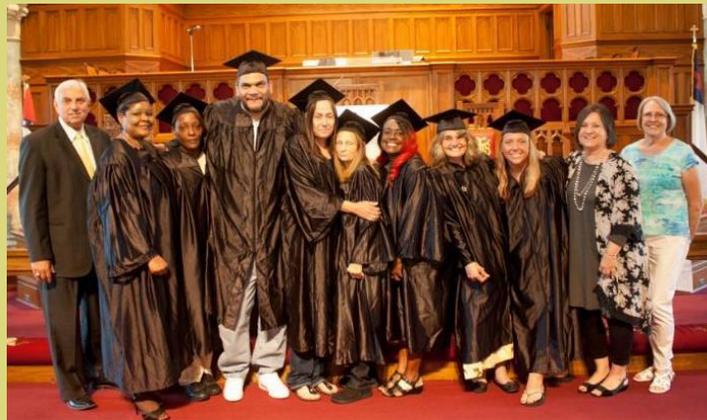
**Second Spring 2017 Getting Ahead in a  
Just-Gettin'-By World  
Graduation Happened June 7th at  
First United Methodist Church**

A second Spring 2017 class of Getting Ahead in a Just-Gettin'-By World graduation was held on June 7th, at First United Methodist Church. The first Getting Ahead Hot Springs graduation was held in this same sanctuary in May, 2015.

We had eight graduates and five had 100% attendance over the 4-month program.

It is always a moving experience to feel their excitement, hear their stories, and watch family and friends congratulate them on their accomplishment.

A familiar refrain on these occasions is..."this is not the end...it's just the beginning" of a new story!



June 7, 2017 Getting Ahead graduates with facilitators Ron and Connie Wright (far left and next to the end far right) and co-facilitator Elizabeth Alderman (far right).

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## First GA Class President Selected by GA June 7, 2017 Graduates

Veronica Blair was chosen by the June 7, 2017 GA graduates as their class president. Asking the class to select someone to this position was recommended to us by the ahaProcess as a way to help keep the group connected and involved. The class president will serve as the group leader and a liaison between the group and CCMC.

Our hope is that asking each upcoming group to select a president will improve communication with the graduates, which gets more difficult after classes are over, and help give the graduates ownership of future GA activities.

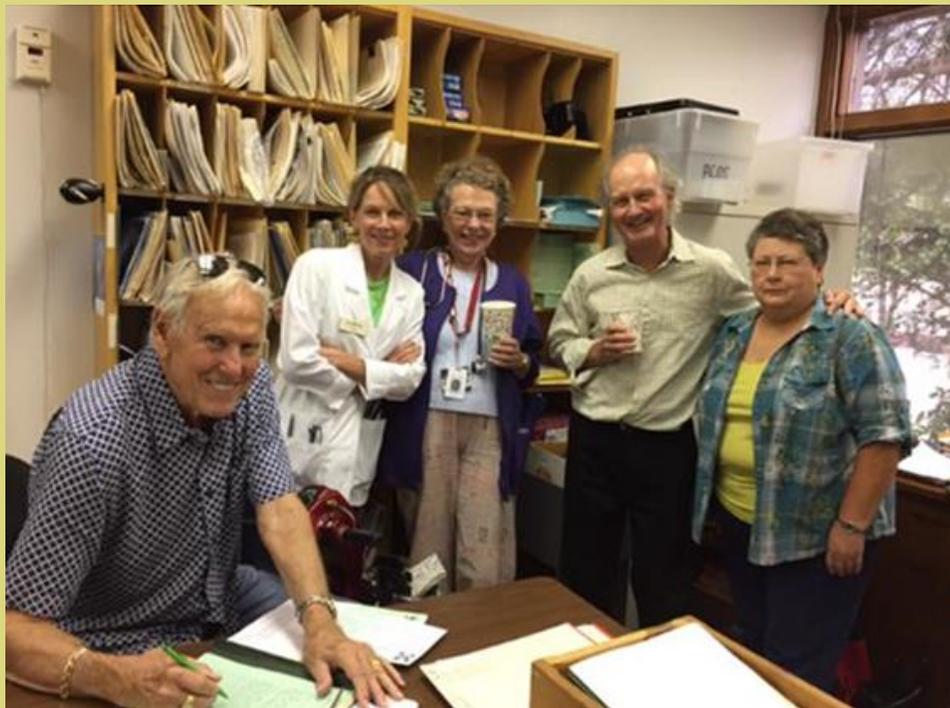
Veronica is the perfect choice for this "first" designation for so many reasons!



Ron Wright, class facilitator, and Veronica Blair

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**A Few of CCMC's  
Medical Clinic Volunteers...  
*A Few of Our Very Favorite People!***



Pictured from left to right: Dr. Don Vowell, Lisa Larey,  
Rita Mosen, Dr. James Tutton, and Joyce Parrish

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**Recent GA Graduate Competes in  
the Annual Running of the Tubs in**

# Downtown Hot Springs



Pictured left is Brandon Darden, a May 2017 Getting Ahead graduate, who was on the Riser Ford Lincoln "Jaws Returns" team during the 12th Annual Steuart Pennington Running of the Tubs on June 3, 2017 in Downtown Hot Springs.

Good job, Brandon!



## Our Spotlight on CCMC Staff and Volunteers

The spotlight this month shines on a CCMC volunteer -



## **Barbara Meyer**

**Born:** Tulsa, Oklahoma

**Been in Hot Springs:** She has lived in Hot Springs Village for 11 years.

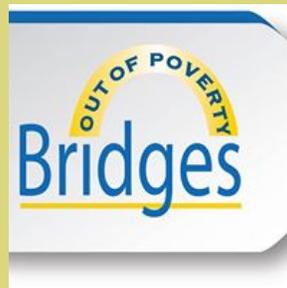
**Family:** Her husband was in the Air Force and was the recipient of two silver stars. She said after he passed away she was told these awards are not easily earned. She has a son who is deaf and lives in Seattle where he works with deaf schizophrenics who require 24/7 help.

**Her role at CCMC:** Barbara greets our clients at the window and checks them in.

**Her favorite thing about CCMC:** She said her favorite thing about CCMC is the people who work here..."They are the most caring, dedicated, and enjoyable people to be around." Those happen to be our exact thoughts about Barbara!

**Hobbies:** Barbara admits an addiction to sudoku, cryptoquotes, and crossword puzzles. She also plays bridge and enjoys cooking and reading.

**Pets:** She doesn't have any pets now, but said she had always had a dog until moving to Hot Springs.



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## **Ongoing Monthly Community Discussions Continue**

**The next meeting will be on Wednesday, July 19!  
Please mark your calendar!**

CCMC continues the monthly Bridge to Hope Community Discussion meetings on the 3rd Wednesday each month, 8:00-9:30 a.m., at the Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce. The next discussion will be held July 19.

We hope you will plan to attend one of these sessions to learn more about how we can all help our community...and its citizens...move forward to sustainability. It will be 90 minutes well spent.

Please call 501.318.1153, ext. 303, to reserve your place or contact us at

[awilson@ccmchs.com](mailto:awilson@ccmchs.com). Bring a friend or colleague!

We will save you a seat!

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## Interested in Learning About Mentoring a Getting Ahead Graduate?

There is an orientation opportunity the second Thursday each month at 11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon at CCMC. The next mentoring orientation session will be held on **July 13**. We hope to see you there!

This is the first step in the training process and is a good way to explore your interest in filling this vital role for Getting Ahead graduates.

Reservations not necessary...just come and find out what Getting Ahead is about and why mentors are wanted and needed.

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## CCMC Speakers Always Ready to Share the Bridge to Hope and Getting Ahead Stories

If you would like to have a CCMC representative come to your business or organization to talk about Bridge to Hope in Hot Springs and the Getting Ahead stories, please contact Lynn Blankenship at [lynn@ccmchs.com](mailto:lynn@ccmchs.com) or call her at 501.318.1153, ext. 103.

The Getting Ahead story is about building resources, removing barriers, and supporting the journey from poverty to sustainability for those in our community who want to benefit from this process. The results...a better workforce, a new group of people to contribute to the community, and stronger families.

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## Ongoing Needs at CCMC

CCMC has many ongoing needs. In addition to volunteer help, which is always needed and appreciated, other needs are:

- Prayer support
- Financial support for overhead costs (utilities, medication, etc.)
- Office supplies (paper, pens, notepads, etc.)
- Paper towels, napkins

Paper plates, cups  
Disinfectant wipes

Costs involved with Getting Ahead include:

Classroom supplies for an entire class (16 participants) - \$200  
Workbooks for a full class - \$300  
Food for a 16-member class session - \$150  
Price per class participant - \$600

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## Monthly Information Meetings for Prospective Getting Ahead Participants

We hold monthly information meetings for prospective participants for Getting Ahead on the **second Thursday of each month**, from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Starla Bleifus, Getting Ahead Coordinator, reviews the process and answers questions that attendees might have about the program.

The GA process is a sixteen-week self-discovery process for participants...to learn about themselves, the eleven resources the material outlines, and the journey from poverty to sustainability.

If you know anyone who would be interested in learning more about Getting Ahead, please encourage them to attend one of these important meetings.

**Upcoming information meeting dates are:**

**July 13, 2017**  
**August 10, 2017**  
**September 14, 2017**

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## Important Meeting Times in July

### **Information Meeting for Getting Ahead Prospective Participants**

Thursday, July 13 10:00-11:00 a.m.  
CCMC

### **Mentor Orientation**

Thursday, July 13 11:00 a.m.-noon  
CCMC

### **Bridge to Hope Community Discussion**

Wednesday, July 19 8:00-9:30 a.m.  
Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce  
*Seating limited - RSVP requested to [awilson@ccmchs.com](mailto:awilson@ccmchs.com)*

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Cooperative Christian Ministries and Clinic  
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