

# TCEC Times

AUGUST 2019

304 Hancock St | Tutwiler, MS 38963 | 662-345-8393

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TCEC

*"Moving our community center forward with innovative and nontraditional programs that continue to address the needs of our community."*

– Melanie Powell



The Tutwiler Community Education Center (TCEC) is on the move. We have hired a new education director, Chandra German-Flower. She brings a wealth of educational knowledge. I am excited she joined our TCEC family.

For the last several months, there have been many changes in the physical appearance of the Center. The computer room was outfitted with new computers and a beautiful floor. Our entryway and offices have been painted with warm inviting colors. The big room where most of our after school activities take place has new lighting. All of the bathrooms now have exhaust fans. The quilting area received a complete makeover fresh paint, new furniture, and quilting enhancements. Also added to the facility upgrades was a new phone system and technology improvements. Wireless data access points were added throughout the Center. We are so grateful for a generous donor couple for covering the cost of these long, overdue updates.

I am happy to announce that we now have a presence on social media. Please like our Facebook pages: TutwilerCEC and Tutwiler Quilters. Check out our new website: [www.tutwilercommunityeducationcenter.org](http://www.tutwilercommunityeducationcenter.org). My goals for the remainder of the year are to work the facility structure, add financial literacy classes for teens and adults, hire additional music teachers, provide community workshops, and purchase new exercise equipment.

Thank you for your donations and your support of the TCEC.

Melanie Powell, Executive Director



### MISSION:

The Tutwiler Community Education Center strengthens children and families by developing programs that address the needs of the community.

### VISION:

We envision a community working together that helps to enrich the lives of children and families.

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# WELCOME TO OUR NEW EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Chandra German-Flowers is our new Education Director. Chandra holds a Master's Degree in Education and has several years of teaching experience. Her knowledge of education will be the key to TCEC enhancing our "educational programming" for children and families. We plan to provide additional support to ensure our children success by increasing family engagement in more programs to help provide learning opportunities for the children in the Tutwiler community.



Our new education director jumped right in with our Summer Program in June. Our children visited the Grammy Museum in Cleveland, MS and it was a real treat! Looks like we may have some budding musicians we can encourage through our Music Program. The children learned some music history, saw many beautiful costumes, and several actual Grammy Award statues were there on display, too. The interactive displays were a big hit. Summer Program participants took swimming lessons at Mississippi Valley State University in Itta Bena, MS. Swimming is fun and learning to swim will make pools, lakes, and beaches more enjoyable and safer. Skating was a real treat for the Summer Program students. A trip to the skating rink in Cleveland, MS was a great way to exercise while having a whole lot of fun, too. TCEC provided the transportation and with the support of our donors, we were able to cover the majority of the participation cost.

Later this summer, all of the Summer Program students and TCEC staff traveled to Memphis to visit the acclaimed Civil Rights Museum, built around the Lorraine Motel where Martin Luther King, Jr. was murdered over 50 years ago. In 2012, a \$27.5 million renovation provided updated exhibits for historical accuracy and to add to their story telling power along with a major upgrade to building systems.



## BACKPACK PROJECT RETURNS

Just before school begins in August our Backpack Project will return. Leading the project is Korie Peace, a former TCEC After School student who reached out to us last year to provide backpacks for 40 TCEC students! How awesome for students to receive a new backpack, complete with school supplies, to start the new school year right. Korie chose to share his success in business and in life by giving back to TCEC. We so appreciate his kindness and so do our children and their families. You can be part of the Backpack Project, too. We always need additional supplies. Just let us know you would like your contribution to go to Backpacks. For a list of needed supplies email us, [info@tutwilercenter.org](mailto:info@tutwilercenter.org).

# TEEN HELPERS

The end of school was great fun! Four of our eight Teen Helpers graduated from West Tallahatchie High School. One was valedictorian and one was salutatorian. Sure makes up proud!!! Each of the four graduates received a Chromebook to help them with their college studies and their future. Thanks to a gracious donor, the entire cost of the laptop computers was donated.

This summer, 12 Teen Helpers were hired to assist with the Summer Program. More than 20 teens applied for the positions because job opportunities are limited in our area. For 28 years, the Teen Helper Program has been an avenue for teens to obtain work experience and learn job readiness skills. Through the application and interview process, teens obtain first-hand knowledge of how to apply for a job, how to complete an application in a timely manner, and how to present themselves in an interview. Orientation for Teen Helpers covered several areas: how to work with children and with your co-workers, time management, anger management, and soft skills. Another Teen Helper, a student at Coahoma Community College (CCC) in Clarksdale, MS, did his work-study at TCEC. His salary was paid by CCC.

Your donations help us pay the Teen Helpers minimum wage salaries and support salaries of staff who supervise the helpers. Without your help, we would not be able to provide this premier job training program.



## TEEN TALK ...

*"I like that I was relied on for typing and researching things."*

– Aaliyah, age 17

*"TCEC is my second family."*

– Robmeisha, age 18

# SENIOR CITIZENS HAVING FUN

Senior Citizens meet weekly and there is never a lack of fun! A beautiful hat parade at TCEC in May was enjoyed by all along with a catered lunch provided by Sheriff Jimmy Fly and his staff. Celebrating Senior Citizen month included a parade around Tutwiler with balloons and a banner with this year's theme: "Connect, Create, and Contribute." We do all three at TCEC!

The Tallahatchie County Emergency Manager met with seniors at TCEC earlier this Spring and explained the new address system for the county. Many residents were notified they would receive a completely new mailing and street address. The project was facilitated by the county in conjunction with the U. S. Postal Service, Homeland Security, and other organizations to consolidate information to provide better postal and, more importantly, emergency services. The Tutwiler Community Education Center's physical address changed to 304 Hancock Ave., Tutwiler, MS 38963.





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Linda Lee, Chair

George Butler, Treasurer

Patricia Grant

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## CENTER STAFF

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Lucinda Berryhill,

Director Assistant

Greg Buchanna, Coach

John Farmer, Coach

Chandra German Flowers,

Education Director

Linda Johnson, Coach

Allie Lewis, Facilities Care

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Pearl Read, Facilities Care

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Tonya Reimbert, Coach

Genether Spurlock, Seniors

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Tracey Thomas, Coach

Mary Willis-Mackey,

Quilt Director

Cynthia Wright, Coach

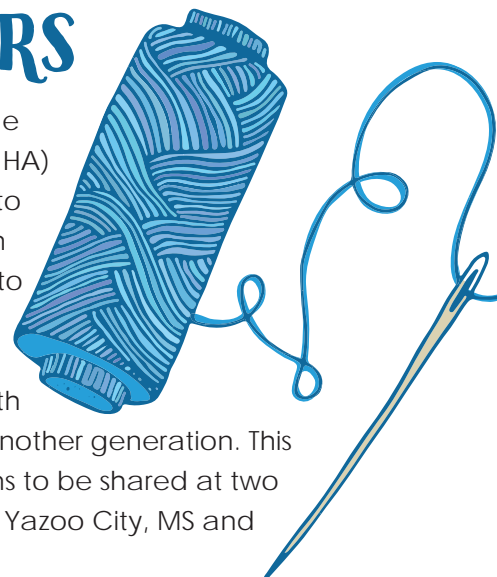
Gloria Young, Facilities Care

Peggy Young,

Program Coordinator

## TUTWILER QUILTERS

The Tutwiler Quilters are really going strong! The Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area (MDNHA) awarded the TCEC Quilting Program a grant to promote and preserve the heritage of African American Quilting. The grant has allowed us to teach sewing and quilting lessons each Saturday for three months. The traditional African American quilting style was shared with many to continue this treasured art form for another generation. This same grant allowed our beautiful quilted items to be shared at two new quilt shows and sales this summer, one in Yazoo City, MS and one in St. Louis, MO.



We were treated to a visit from National Park Service representatives. They provide funding for the MDNHA. The visit could not have happened at a better time. We had just completed updating our "Quilt Area" here at the Center with fresh paint and new fixtures to display the beautiful quilted items more attractively. TCEC was awarded, too, a Passport Stop on the MDNHA visitors trail. Travelers from literally around the world come to the Mississippi Delta for blues music, civil rights tours, literary tours, agricultural tours and more. The MDNHA office at Delta State set up a "stamp your passport" program to encourage travelers to visit some of the "out of the way and important" areas on the trail through 18 counties. The Tutwiler Center is proud to be part of the "Passport Project." We invite everyone to come visit the TCEC.

Again this year, sewing and quilt making were a part of our Summer Program. Both boys and girls learned the basics of using a sewing machine properly and safely. They enjoyed sharing their quilted item.

Our quilters always need cotton fabrics, quilting thread, corduroy (one yard minimum) and solid colored cotton flat sheets for quilt backing. Each Tutwiler Quilter is provided all the materials needed to make the items we sell at shows and at the Center. Their creations are amazing, beautiful, and extremely useful. The bowl cozy to use in the microwave is wonderfully handy as is the baked potato bag! Our list of available items is included in this newsletter. Just give us a call to order at 662.345.8393. Our online ordering is also available. Please check out our website: [tutwilercommunityeducationcenter.org](http://tutwilercommunityeducationcenter.org)

Later this fall, we will have a large selection of pot holders, table runners, placemats, coasters, and other items with holiday printed fabrics. These make thoughtful gifts.

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***For more information, contact Mary Ann Willis-Mackey, 662-345-8393.***



## QUILTED ITEMS PRICE LIST

Item	Approx. size (in inches)	Price	Postage
Cell Phone Bag	4 ½ x 6 ½	\$15	\$10
Tablet Bag	6 x 8	\$18	\$10
iPad Bag	7 ½ x 10	\$20	\$10
Tote Bag	12 x 12	\$25	\$10
Mini Wall Hanging	12 x 18	\$10	\$10
Wall Hanging	20 x 40	\$45	\$10
Wall Hanging	36 x 48	\$80	\$10
Baby Quilt	36 x 48	\$80	\$10
Twin Quilt	66 x 96	\$325	\$35
Full Quilt	81 x 96	\$350	\$35
Queen Quilt	90 x 102	\$375	\$40
King Quilt	108 x 102	\$400	\$40

Additional Items	Price	Postage
Card	\$1.75	\$0.50
Cards (5)	\$8	\$2
Pot Holder	\$7	\$5
Blues Pot Holder	\$10	\$5
Pot Holder Mitt	\$15	\$5
Placemats (set of 4)	\$40	\$10
Table Runner	\$45	\$10

*Postage includes insurance and tracking*





## CENTER NEEDS

Enrichment Field Trip

Sponsors

Gift Cards (McDonalds,  
Subway, KFC, Pizza Hut,  
Dollar General, Walmart,  
and gas cards for the van)

New Exercise Equipment

Notebook Paper

Pencils/Pens

Personal Care Items

Educational Games



### SEND TO:

304 Hancock Street  
Tutwiler, MS 38963

## FUN IN THE GYM

Our gym is a very popular place for the youth and for adults in the community. Our youth participated in basketball "jamborees" around the area. TCEC provided the transportation for the children to interact with youth in other communities and to practice sportsmanship by playing competitive games. We have several age groups and everyone was recognized at our annual "Athletic Banquet." Our former Teen Helper and current Head Coach for Women's Basketball at Coahoma Community College, Stephanie Murphy, was the guest speaker. She encouraged the youth by sharing words of wisdom.

TCEC continues to offer a safe environment for teens to engage in physical activities. Teens can play organized basketball games three times a week under the supervision of TCEC coaches and workout on the exercise equipment. Your donations help us keep the facility up to code, safe and most of all, fun!



## AND THE MUSIC PLAYS ON ...

TCEC is blessed with friends across the country who have actually founded and continued our Sonny Boy Williamson Blues Music Program for several years. Jon Gindick and his Harmonica Campers continue to visit TCEC and provide funds for the music program. They help in other areas of the Center as well. This past fall, they toured the computer lab and recognized the need to update computers. A retired New York Fire Department 9-11 responder wrote the first check and challenged other Harmonica Campers to help replace the computers for the children.

They met and exceeded the challenge! Another camper, a police officer in Nantucket, hosts a "Music for the Kids" fundraising event each year just for the Tutwiler Community Education Center! Musicians, young and old, come together for an afternoon of fun, mostly blues, sharing and most of all, caring! Many thanks to those who specify they want to support the Music Program with their contribution. We appreciate you making it happen.

We are excited to share with you that this year, our Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area grant award is for the "Tutwiler Blues" music program! We will be able to hire additional teachers and offer music lessons to the students who want to learn to play an instrument! We are excited to strengthen our Music Program at the beginning of the school year. Because of you, children of Tutwiler get to learn music at TCEC. They have no other place nearby to learn to play the blues and other music.



# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

## “Nuns on the Bus”

We were fortunate to host the “Nuns on the Bus” leader, Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of NETWORK Advocates for Catholic Social Justice at the Tutwiler Center during the spring. She met with community residents, local teens, and a group of teens who joined us from Jonestown, MS. Sister Simone is an advocate for rural residents across the country. Topics of discussion included lack of transportation, jobs, education, crime and violence, connectivity and affordable, healthy foods. Sister Simone took these challenges back to Washington, D.C. She plans to meet with Mississippi elected officials and share these concerns to encourage leaders to formulate solutions to benefit their voters. Unfortunately, the following week, one of the Jonestown participants was critically injured in a random shooting after her high school graduation ceremony, emphasizing the problems discussed during the evening.



## Delta Educational Opportunity Center

Delta State representatives met with high school students from West Tallahatchie High School and from the Fairland Center. Services available to high school students were explained to those attending. The Center works to prepare high school students for entering college. The Center assists students with applying for financial aid, scholarships, and helps with college entrance exams like SAT and ACT.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Planters Bank

Mississippi Community Financial Access Coalition (MCFAC), sponsored by Planters Bank, is a Financial Literacy program for teens and families. MCFAC is comprised of community- and faith-based organizations; social services agencies; financial institutions; federal, state and local agencies; and universities whose focus is to create policies that impact low- and moderate-income individuals, families and communities. The five-week program, which promotes a greater understanding of finances and how to build and use credit, will be offered this fall.

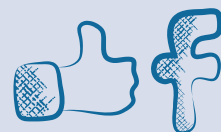
### Candidates' Forum

In early August, Tallahatchie County elections will begin with voting for Tutwiler residents taking place at TCEC. Several of the offices are heavily contested with numerous candidates filing. TCEC will host a “Candidates Forum” for the public to learn the qualifications and ideas of those running for office. The TCEC provides the forum in order to engage the voting public and give them the opportunity to hear from, and interact with, those vying for local offices.

## LIKE US ON FACEBOOK

Tutwiler Quilters

Tutwiler Community  
Education Center



## SHOP AT AMAZON AND DONATE!

Support TCEC every time you shop, at no cost to you. Use your Amazon login at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), and find the same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience you are used to, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to TCEC.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile, select **Tutwiler Community Education Center** before you begin shopping. Every eligible purchase will result in a donation to the center.

*TCEC values the privacy of our friends and donors and we do not sell or share our mailing list. To update or change your contact information, please e-mail [mpowell@tutwilercenter.org](mailto:mpowell@tutwilercenter.org).*

## BUILDING UPGRADES

You, our friends and donors, make things happen here at the Tutwiler Center! We are so grateful for a couple who recognized our need for updates to our building and made a significant contribution to allow us to brighten up our space. We were able to replace our 28-year-old light fixtures in our "big room" where our children gather each day! The new, energy-efficient fixtures are amazing!



Painting the entry area, hallway, and our quilt display area has certainly lightened up TCEC. We have new carpet and new furniture to replace broken desks. New flooring in the computer lab presents a fresh, clean work area for our children and for community residents to job search online.

Although we receive many compliments on how "nice and clean" we keep TCEC, thanks to our daily cleaning staff, our 28-year-old building has some issues that need to be repaired soon. The exceptionally wet rainy winter and spring has taken a toll on our gutters and has created drainage issues for the building. We are hoping to address these problems soon.

**NEW WEBSITE:** [www.tutwilercommunityeducationcenter.org](http://www.tutwilercommunityeducationcenter.org)



304 Hancock St.  
P. O. Box 448  
Tutwiler, MS 38963  
662-345-8393

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