**Mrs. Audie Martin Retires**

In 1985, Coca-Cola Company introduced its new coke; and James T. Russell developed compact diskettes, better known as CD's. On the technology front, the first ".com" was registered; and the first version of Windows Version 1.0 was released. One of the biggest acts of humanity, Live Aid concerts, was conducted to raise many millions to help the starving in Africa, and the United States pop industry joined together to sing "We Are The World".

"We Are The World" is fitting at a time like this because Mrs. Audie Martin has dedicated most of her life to the youth at Oakley Training School, now known as the Oakley Youth Development Center (OYDC). Mrs. Martin or as many know her, "Mrs. Belle joined the OYDC team in 1985. It is always a significant occasion when a long-standing colleague retires, and for those who know her incredibly well, saying goodbye is a bitter-sweet experience.

"Greatness" is an over-utilized word these days, but when it comes to Mrs. Martin and what she has done for the youth, in particular during her time here, this is one of those occasions when it is justified. She has done so many things: she has helped motivate the youth, but she has loved them most of all.

Mrs. Martin's colleagues say it best:

George Schmaus stated, "I have known Ms. Belle since I first worked at Oakley around 23 years ago. She is a sweet lady who took care of her business. Although quiet and unassuming, she got the job done. She has been an icon at Oakley Youth Development Center and will truly be missed by those that knew her. May she enjoy herself and not work too hard on that farm!"

Dr. Daniels stated, "Ms. Belle has been a dedicated worker for over 30 years. She has been a person of integrity with great people skills. Mrs. Belle has been a great friend and support person for OYDC. I wish her nothing but peace and joy in her retirement."

Mrs. Jaclyn Buford stated, "Love Ms. Belle! She was always my go-to person and will be missed tremendously. It is good when someone is stable when everyone changes. I always called her even when it wasn't her area, and she always found my answer. She was the ROCK that held Oakley together during every transition, and I am not sure how Oakley will survive without her."

Dr. Tonja Williams stated, "My most memorable moments of Mrs. Bell is how she always greeted you with the biggest smile and hug (Pre -COVID, of course). After COVID, her bubbly personality and smile continue to warm the hearts of all she comes into contact with. I also remember and appreciate her dedication to the details of each student's parole process. Her genuine care for the well-being of the student we serve is amazing. I truly love her and will miss her dearly."

Dr. Green stated, "Ms. Belle has been a great help and support to me over the years. She has always shown me kindness and respect from the first day that I started my employment with Oakley. Ms. Belle has a heart for the youth we serve and the staff. She will truly be missed."

Theresa Peterson stated, "I love Ms. Belle! From the beginning, Ms. Belle has helped me get the needed paperwork together. Ms. Belle has always been very patient and kind to me in all communication. I will miss her sweet manner of dealing with me as a Community Counselor. Her years of service have been such an awesome addition to the agency."

In the words of Maya Angelou: I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

The way Mrs. Audie "Belle" Martin made everyone feel will never be forgotten. She will be missed.