

CUSTOMER SERVICE



**MINDY JANE
COLEMAN**
Department of Health and
Human Services,
Black Mountain Neuro-
Medical Treatment Center

Mindy Jane Coleman is the Creative Expressive Arts Therapist for Black Mountain Neuro-Medical Treatment Center, where she strives to enhance the quality of life for residents experiencing a wide range of disabilities. Her work to encourage them to express their true self, validating who they are, just as they are, inspires staff and family members who delight in seeing sparks of recognition and engagement from loved ones.

As a college student, Coleman pursued a dance career but found that the structured manner of how it was taught stifled her creativity. However, she draws on her training to create engaging activities using a variety of artistic outlets for residents. Whether it's dance, music or squirting paint-filled water guns at a large canvas, residents respond with laughs, smiles and increased body movements such as feet tapping.

Coleman's efforts go beyond group activities, creating a network of support by staff and community members to nurture residents. During one occasion, she worked with an Intellectual Developmental Diagnosis resident, giving her the opportunity to learn about an artist with a similar diagnosis. The resident was so inspired by the artist's work and life story that she wanted to create her own pieces of art. With help from staff and family, Coleman guided her through the process so she could finish the project. Soon after, Coleman submitted a proposal to an Asheville library to display the artwork in the lobby. The library accepted the proposal and the pieces were installed in early 2019.



Mindy Jane Coleman is dedicated to creating authentic experiences for residents to validate who they are, encourage self-expression and ultimately interaction.