



Michael A. Young
Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center

Michael Young is an employee who consistently does more than go above and beyond his job duties. Michael has been with the Anderson-Oconee-Pickens Mental Health Center since 2004 and has served in a Child and Adolescent homeless program, the Crisis Stabilization Unit, and most recently in our Intensive Community Treatment (ICT) program in Pickens and Oconee counties. He has entered each new endeavor with a smile not only for his co-workers, but for all patients. Mr. Young spends 95% of his job in the community, working with some of the most challenging individuals within the ICT program.

Mr. Young consistently re-engages persons with their families, and always includes the families as a support system for his patients. Michael also assists his coworkers whenever they encounter special needs or obstacles for their patients, whether it involves locating resources or assisting with rapport-building. On many occasions, Mr. Young offers to assist clinicians by accompanying them on home visits to see their patients. His persona radiates a calming presence for patients and staff. Michael has that innate ability to engage and strategically de-escalate the most challenging patients and, at the same time, teach the person how to utilize their coping skills to maintain community tenure. When he needs to express to someone that they need to try a little harder, they accept his advice and appreciate him for it. He does an exceptional job at leading the BEST trainings for AOPMHC staff and presents the information in such a way that his co-workers learn something new each time.

Outside of the workplace, Mr. Young serves as the director of the music program at his local church. Mr. Young is a former member of the Grammy-winning gospel group, The Tri-City Singers. In his spare time he continues his music ministry to the community through mentoring children in his church in regards to improving their vocal skills and in consultation with other musicians in the Anderson-Oconee-Pickens areas in the delivery of vocal ministry within the community.

Mr. Young has always been compassionate, caring, empathetic, hard-working, selfless, friendly, a promoter of teamwork, dedicated, giving, and motivated. Michael has a way about him that really connects with the persons he serves. He consistently manages to connect with individuals and family members on a direct and therapeutic level. These qualities establish him as a great example of the qualities and ideals espoused by Mrs. Hassenplug and well deserving of this award.