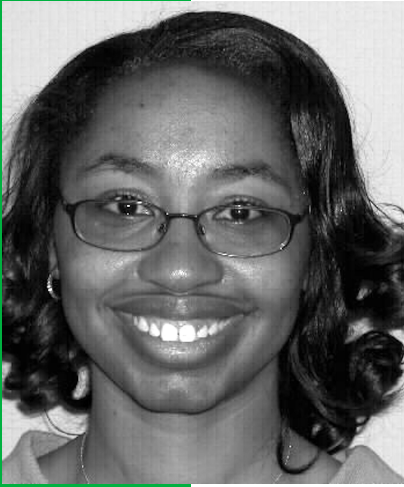


2018 PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP



Sondra Reese,

MPH

Chronic Disease Director
Alabama Department of Public Health

The Profiles in Leadership campaign is an interview series with several Chronic Disease Directors to provide a glimpse into the leadership theories, influences, and approaches of industry leaders that help them corral, encourage, and support their teams. This interview series and other supplemental readings can be found at chronicdisease.org.

Sondra Reese, MPH is the current Chronic Disease Director for the Alabama Department of Public Health. She has 18 years of public health experience and leads the daily operations of a seven-person chronic disease unit. Sondra shares with us her approach to leading and encouraging a changing team.

What is the biggest workplace challenge you have faced as a division leader?

Keeping good people. As people gather more experience they will have opportunities to advance their careers. Millennials will not remain in one place doing the same job for 25 years. You have to adapt to the changing trends in the work force.

How were you able to overcome this challenge and find the win-win?

You cannot focus on the fact that a person might leave for a better opportunity; you have to ensure that the employee operates at his or her fullest potential while they are working at your department. You want the employee to be a better employee, when they leave compared with when they started.

What is the most rewarding aspect of leading your team?

As a leader, what is most rewarding is watching team members figure out how to overcome barriers in their work.

What one word do you want your team to keep in mind as they perform their daily work?

"Flexibility." People have to be ready to make changes and adapt to a changing environment.

To what extent do you encourage individual development activity during the workday across your team?

I really encourage team members to participate in webinars and conferences that are beneficial to the advancement of chronic disease activities within our state. Sometimes, we gather in a conference room to view webinars rather than viewing them individually at our desk. Furthermore, when a person is unavailable to view the webinar, another person on the team will take notes.

For information on how to participate in the Profiles in Leadership campaign, contact Tamika Smith at tsmith@chronicdisease.org



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