



**The Outstanding Rural Health Program of the Year Award** recognizes a statewide or regional program that promotes the development of rural health care delivery systems; promotes and/or provides increased access to health care services for rural populations or that improves the quality of rural health care through outreach and education. Factors taken into consideration include coordination, networking, innovation, and lasting impact. The Louisiana Rural Health Association is honored to name **LifePhases Consulting, LLC** (LifePhases) as the 2023 Outstanding Rural Health Program of the Year award recipient.

LifePhases Consulting, LLC was founded in 2011 under the leadership of Sherry Banks, M.S.N., R.N., B.C and Jill Elias, M.S.W., L.C.S.W. Combined, these two outstanding, goal driven, and innovative leaders, have 45 years of specialized experience in the field of formulating rural health delivery systems.

LifePhases began with opening Intensive Outpatient Psychiatric Services (IOPs), Partial Hospitalization Units, and In-Patient Psychiatric Units in rural hospitals that had limited access to psychiatric community services. Their expertise and involvement in rural health services has recently expanded to consulting with different facilities and hospitals across the state of Louisiana. In recent years, LifePhases has assisted Rural Health Clinics and Federally Qualified Health Centers in providing Psychiatric and Mental Health Therapy, Medication Management services, and Substance Abuse Clinics. LifePhases is skilled in opening and maintaining these programs, through either short-term consulting or long-term consulting and their collaboration gives the community the knowledge and access to services that will meet the needs of patients locally and effectively.

LifePhases has consulted with, collaborated with, and opened many services for hospitals and clinics including Union General Hospital, Hartdner Medical Center, Richland Parish/Delhi Hospital, Delhi FQHC, Madison Parish Hospital, Morehouse General Hospital, Claiborne Medical Center, and West Feliciana Hospital, among others.

As one example, through partnership with Union General Hospital, LifePhases has developed a “small but effective program”, that has provided services for “over 300 local residents suffering from many common issues including depression, eating disorders, suicide and many other issues that affect our aging population... This program has been a great success for our Hospital and the Consultants have definitely been instrumental in bringing badly needed Mental Health to our community and the many others around the state.”, stated Dianne Davidson, Union General Hospital Chief Executive Officer.

Access to mental health and substance use disorder services is a significant challenge across the state of Louisiana, especially in rural areas. LifePhases’ contribution to the expansion of mental health services is helping to meet a dire need for our rural communities and residents.

Jenequa Jones, IOP Director at Union General Hospital, noted in her nomination of the program, that Sherry and Jill’s “passion for rural health surpasses the acknowledgement one could give them”.

In recognition and great appreciation for their passion and dedication to our rural patients and communities, the Louisiana Rural Health Association is honored to recognize LifePhases Consulting, LLC as the 2023 Outstanding Rural Health Program of the Year Award Recipient.

