

LAURIE M. JACKSON

Laurie Michelle Lanakila Smith-Jackson is a native of Nashville, Tennessee. She graduated from Hunters Lane High School and continued her education at Tennessee State University where she earned a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work. Ever thirsty for knowledge, Laurie did her post-graduate work at the University of Tennessee and earned a Master's Degree in Social Work. Her passion for Social Work also led her to obtain her licensure as a LMSW (Licensed Master's Social Worker).

Laurie sees Social Work as a "High and Noble Calling" that can literally change the destiny of an individual for eternity. She has a special passion for children and youth. Laurie has worked for the Nashville Rehab Center in Nashville, the Department Of Children Services in Nashville where she was an investigator for child protective services for the severe abuse unit and the Sumner County Health Department in Gallatin where she was a supervisor of the HUGGS program. Her love for children who are at risk has led her to her current position as a Therapist/Case-Manager of School-Based Services for Centerstone where she daily counsels, engages and encourages students at Rosebank Elementary School. Laurie also provides family services and grief counseling at New Generation Funeral Home for children and youth who have experienced bereavement.

No stranger to work, Laurie has worked multiple jobs simultaneously since her youth. Her independent spirit, strong perseverance, quiet dignity and faith in God has guided and sustained her throughout the years. Her life experiences have given her a unique perspective and sensitivity to children and youth in general and young girls in particular. She truly believes that, "With God, all things are possible, and that God will give you beauty for your ashes."

In the year 1996, Laurie married the love of her life, Derrick Jackson, the Pastor of First Baptist Church – Gallatin, and in 2003, God blessed she and Pastor Jackson with a son, Joshua Alexander Jackson.

Although her career is very rewarding, Laurie cherishes spending quality time with her husband and son as well as other family members and friends. Laurie sees her relationship with God and her relationship with her family as her most prized possessions. She loves traveling, reading, scrapbooking, shopping, going to movies, and hanging out with her family.

In recognition of her outstanding scholastic achievement and excellence, Laurie was granted membership into the Golden Key International Honor Society. Laurie has also been inducted into the Iota Chapter of Alpha Mu Delta Mu National Social Work Honor Society and received a special recognition from the Honorable Thelma Harper, Tennessee Senator from the 19th District. Laurie has also been a board member of CASA in Davidson County and the Foster Care Review Board in Gallatin, and she volunteers her time in various community causes. Laurie's goal in life is to be "an advocate for children, a voice for the voiceless and an encourager for those who have lost hope."