



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES

PRESS RELEASE



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CONTACT: Jocelyn Harris, Public Affairs Specialist
O: 202-730-1687 • C: 202-664-2162
jocelyn.harris2@dc.gov

Couple Who Met in Forest Haven Wed this Weekend

Valentine's Wedding a Reminder that Everybody Needs Somebody to Love

Washington, DC— From the moment they saw each other Charles and Jackie had a special connection. The two met in Forest Haven, the District's former institution for people with disabilities. For a while, they were seemingly inseparable. The eventual closing of the institution and circumstances of life often associated with relationships resulted in several breakups; eventually the two lost contact with one another. However, as life often does, they reconnected a couple of years ago on a job site at DC ARC. This Sunday, February 14, Charles Kinnamont, age 74, and Jacqueline Shipp, age 65, will become husband and wife. This is the first marriage for both the bride and groom.

The wedding takes place at 5 pm, at The Villa in Beltsville, MD. The couple will be surrounded by family, friends, and support staff from the D.C. Department on Disability Services and provider organizations My Own Place and Symbral.

When asked why she wanted to marry Charles, Jackie, who works as a courtesy clerk at Giant, said that it was because he was "nice and kind." Asked why he wanted to marry Jackie, Charles, a retired janitor, simply stated that he didn't want to be single all his life. Now he has a new mission: To do any and everything to keep Jackie, his wife happy. They both agreed that it was important to have somebody to love.

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Background Information: Charles Kinnamont and Jacqueline Shipp are people with intellectual disabilities who were committed to Forest Haven, the District of Columbia's former institution for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Charles resided in Forest Haven from childhood until the facility closed, as directed by court order, in 1991; Jacqueline lived there for 17 years.

The Department on Disability Services is a dynamic organization serving people with disabilities through the services of the Developmental Disabilities Administration and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This comprehensive collaborative approach provides innovative high quality services that enable people with disabilities to lead productive lives as vital members of their families, schools, workplaces, and communities. Learn more at www.dds.dc.gov and follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/DDS.DC>.