



JB Pritzker, Governor

Grace B. Hou, Secretary Designate

Ludeman Developmental Center
114 N Orchard Drive • Park Forest, Illinois 60466

Hello All —

I wanted to take this opportunity to formally introduce myself. I am a mom, daughter, sister, niece, aunt and friend who takes pride in family. It has been a blessing to set out and cultivate a career in the human services field.

By discipline, I am a Social Worker whom started my humbled roots serving some of the most vulnerable communities in the City of Chicago. I obtained my bachelor's degree from Chicago State University in Sociology and my master's degree from the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration in Clinical Social Work, which afforded me the opportunity to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker. I also pursued and attained a Professional Certification in Forensic Social Work from the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois.

The first 12 years of my career were spent working in under-served communities facing many despairing challenges; from substance abuse to domestic violence, and housing inequality to medical and food desert issues. I have had the privilege to serve on both the direct care and administrative sides of the table, which provides insight and a well-rounded perspective when serving the community. Although I recently joined the State of Illinois workforce, a little over a year ago, I have worked multiple state-funded contracts for DCFS and IDHS, as well as serving families that reside in Chicago Housing Authority (CHA).

I eventually elected for a career in medical social work where I led teams of clinicians working with patients and families with multitudes of social determinants of health that, often, led to failed health because of the lack of medical resources. My team and I were instrumental in assisting our patients with navigating services that many patients didn't even know existed, let alone believed that they themselves were privileged enough to deserve.

I was honored to join the SODC team last spring as a Unit Administrator at the Ann M. Kiley Center, as I have always had a great reverence for the population served. I have been instrumental in cultivating some wonderful, yet essential, relationships with the individuals served, their guardians, the staff, and the Union. It has been a pleasure to become an addition to the SODC family and I am looking forward to building the same, and more, relationships at Ludeman Center. I come with a humble spirit to serve and a vivacious energy to lead with the intention to collaborate with every member of this community. I promise to be inclusive and am eager to run this marathon as an active member. This is not a sprint so let's run this slow, but steady, race together.

Sincerely,
Tameka Watson, LCSW
Interim Center Director Ludeman Developmental Center