



# *Celebrating* **LaTaya Hunt**

LaTaya (a.k.a. LaToya) Hunt is a 2023 MSW graduate student at the University of Georgia. After graduating with her BSW from Mississippi State University, LaTaya entered the child welfare profession in 2006 and has been in the profession for 17 years. She started off as a case manager and within two years was promoted to supervisor in the family preservation department. After a while, she switched to another county and became supervisor over intake, investigations, family preservations, and family support. After three years, LaTaya moved into the role of quality assurance supervisor for foster care and adoptions in a new county. From there, LaTaya was promoted to an administrator role over family support, where she took on the challenge of having over 1200 cases with only three case managers. She was able to build up a team to fully support the 1200 cases before transferring to Chatham County, GA, as an administrator. After a couple of years, she was promoted to district manager for special investigations, where she investigated high-profile cases. Eventually, she was promoted to county director. LaTaya was able to accomplish all of this before discovering NCWWI and signing up for graduate school. To be successful in grad school, LaTaya decided to give up her role as county director and take on a less demanding position as a data integrity specialist. She is now completing her internship in external affairs as a program advocate.

LaTaya credits the experiential learning within her career, before starting her master's degree program, for her success. Her background gives her the ability to take on different perspectives and have an understanding that although this work may be hard at times, trouble doesn't last always. LaTaya is inspired by her mother, who has three degrees and has overcome many obstacles, and her children. LaTaya prides herself on being successful in a great profession while being a great mother, daughter, and wife. She loves being able to demonstrate to her daughters that they too can be great moms and wives while excelling in their careers. Balancing work and home life has been one of her greatest challenges that she has learned to manage. She won the 2022-23 Student of the Year award from UGA, while balancing home, work, and school. In LaTaya's words, "I cry, release, then tackle", when she is feeling overwhelmed with all that she has on her plate.

As an Army Veteran, LaTaya has a passion for supporting and advocating for veteran's services for women. She looks forward to becoming more involved in supporting fellow veterans, getting into the clinical field, and eventually earning her PhD in social work. LaTaya's advice to new child welfare workers is to never give up! She urges workers that when they feel stressed or burned out, to remember there are many other positions within the child welfare profession that may be a better fit for them. Her guidance is to build connections, try other placements, and don't let fear hold you back from taking leadership roles.

*"Do not go where the path may lead, go instead  
where there is no path and leave a trail."*

*~Ralph Waldo Emerson*