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UNDERSTANDING OUR ASSIGNMENT

DATES: JULY 18TH-22ND
TIME: 5:30PM-8PM
AGES 5-12

Mason: from front

goes far beyond her assigned duties, according to UTC Chancellor Steven R. Angle. During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mason was “one of our frontline heroes for her commitment to protecting others and providing leadership during uncharted waters,” he wrote in her nomination for the President’s Award. “Anyone who interacts with Carla is left feeling valued and important.”

Mason was previously honored with the Chancellor’s Blue Ribbon Award in 2018, given to those who go above and beyond the call of duty at UTC.

Whether she prays or reads passages from the Bible during her short respites throughout her workday at UTC--which starts at 6 a.m.--Mason said she stays positive and stays driven by her faith.

“I ask the Lord every day to let His light shine in me,” she said, “and you know what? Some people say to me, ‘There’s something different about you.’ And I’m like, ‘Yeah, the holy spirit.’”

Mason, the youngest of 11 children, grew up not far from the UTC campus in Alton Park. Her grandfather was a preacher and she was raised in the church. She now attends Greater Community Church of Chattanooga Church of God In Christ.

She and her husband, Leroy Mason, who she calls her best friend, met in elementary school and started dating by high school.

“I thought he looked like Michael Jackson,” said Mason, a former majorette at Howard High School.

They’ve been together ever since and have four children, 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

“Family is everything to me. We’re so close,” said Mason, whose house serves as a daily gathering spot.

Her only daughter and “other best friend,” Calebra Mason, was her date for the award ceremony in Knoxville.

“I’m so proud of her. She really is the best,” Calebra said of her mom.

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