

Committed to Excellence

THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES (DYRS) NEWSLETTER

January 30, 2020



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear DYRS staff, community partners, youth and families:
Happy 2020!

Looking back over 2019, I think it's fair to say that we have gone through several changes. While it seems like the year flew by quickly, we all experienced some long days and nights along the way. But the one thing that held us together, kept us focused, and guided us on our collective path has been our North Star – the guiding light that represents a belief that we and our children are worthy and capable of translating Love into our policies, practices, and actions.

This past year and over the course of our five-year journey together, we have lost some battles and we've even lost loved ones along the way. Yet, despite our painful losses, we have continued our revolutionary walk toward our North Star. Lives have been saved, relationships have been restored, minds have been cleansed, hearts have been touched, souls have been inspired, and spirits have been renewed. These experiences have not been limited to the youth and families that we serve but also extend to the staff, credible messengers, service providers, and others who make up the fabric of our collective village.

So let's continue this journey in 2020 on a positive note, fully aware and prepared for the challenges we face, yet armed with the confidence, knowledge and skills to love, care, think, and work our way to successfully serving our youth and families. At DYRS, success will be defined by healthy young people engaging in a full array of developmental activities focused on education, future economic opportunity, physical and emotional wellness, creative arts, recreation, and healthy relationships – all encouraged, nurtured, and supported by an inspired village of caring adults (DYRS staff, credible messengers, service providers, parents, and you) united in a spirit of collaboration in service to our youth.

Let's be driven by a certainty of purpose and clarity of our role. Let's enter 2020 with 20/20 vision.
In solidarity,
Clinton Lacey, Director



POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Real Talk Lecture Series Celebration at the Youth Services Center

Last month, the Youth Services Center (YSC) held its first end of the year celebration for youth and staff who participated in the Real Talk Lecture Series. Founded by Team Leader Dr. Japeth Claude, the series was capped off with this event that recognized the many achievements and successes of youth throughout the year.

The celebration highlighted staff and youth achievements, past guest speakers, and made it a point to give special recognition for those individuals that were identified as the "Real Talk BIG DEAL Supporters." Held in the gymnasium, the event included the Real Talk Youth Achievement Awards, which were broken down into three categories: Mr. & Ms. Best Dressed, Mr. & Ms. Most Improved, and lastly Mr. & Ms. Change Agent.

Staff members on each unit deliberated and collectively identified a resident to be recognized in each category. The audience, which was comprised of youth, staff, and community supporters, applauded as youth walked to the front of the stage with their heads held high as they received their awards. Unit staff from C200 and A100 were also acknowledged during the ceremony for their creativity and preparedness as it related to the Real Talk Series programs.



Event Calendar

JAN 31

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT REGISTRATION

450 H STREET NW - 3 PM - 5 PM

FEB 3

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT REGISTRATION

2101 MLK JR AVE SE - 3 PM - 5 PM

FEB 3

ANCHORED IN STRENGTH - 450 H STREET NW - WASHINGTON, DC

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

FEB 10

ANCHORED IN STRENGTH - 2101 MLK JR AVE SE - WASHINGTON, DC

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

FEB 11

YOUNG KINGS AND QUEENS POETRY SLAM - YSC

1000 MT OLIVET RD NE - 1:30 PM - 5:00 PM

FEB 12

"HRT WELLNESS": HERITAGE JENGA

2101 MLK JR AVE SE - 12 PM - 1 PM

FEB 18

BLACK HISTORY & SOUL FOOD - NB

8400 RIVER RD, LAUREL, MD - 1:30 PM - 5 PM

FEB 19

"HRT WELLNESS": HERITAGE JENGA

450 H STREET NW - 12 PM - 1 PM

FEB 24

ANCHORED IN STRENGTH - 2101 MLK JR AVE SE - WASHINGTON, DC

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

FEB 25

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN HISTORY ESSAY COMPETITION - 1000 MT OLIVET RD NE

2:30 PM - 5:30 PM

FEB 29

EW BEGINNINGS STEP SHOW - NB

8400 RIVER RD, LAUREL, MD - 12:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Rwanda Delegation Visits New Beginnings

The New Beginnings Youth Development Center recently welcomed a delegation tour of guests from Rwanda. The visiting collective included Bishop John Rucyahana, Chairman of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission; General George Rwigamba, Commissioner General of Rwanda Correctional Services; Pius Nyakayiro, Director of Good News of Peace and Development for Rwanda; and Jean Paul Ntwali, Director of Programs for the Prison Fellowship: Rwanda. Our guests learned about how DYRS infuses agency practices with restorative justice tools, met agency leadership, and explored the Laurel-based facility.



DYRS Exceeds DC One Fund Goal

In support of the local nonprofit and service organizations that aid communities in the District and throughout the Washington Metropolitan area, DYRS contributed a total of \$18,576.98 to the DC One Fund. The final amount exceeded the agency's initial \$16,069.53 goal for the District government workplace giving program. Many thanks to our agency staff for going above and beyond to learn about the participating organizations.

Over the course of four weeks and in the spirit of service and community engagement, DYRS hosted several events across locations to raise awareness about these charitable causes. Many thanks to local organizations that shared information about available programs and services, including the Extra-Ordinary Birthdays, the United Planning Organization, and After School All Stars DC. Congratulations to the New Beginnings Youth Development Center for being the location that raised the most money in contributions with 75 donors and the Youth Services Center as a close second with 60 contributors.



Led by Love: Wellness and Juvenile Justice

It's still January, which means that resolutions, rededicating to healthy living, and fresh starts for 2020 are top of mind for many of us. But what does that mean for our youth, and particularly those connected to the juvenile justice system?

On Wednesday, January 22nd, Director Clinton Lacey explored that topic on Led by Love on WPFW 89.3 FM. Many thanks to guests Remy Henderson, founder of DOLLS & Dreams, Inc., Dr. Adrian Faulkner, DYRS Program Manager for Community Health Services with Rashid Hughes, a mindfulness and yoga teacher, and Tyrone C. Parker, Executive Director of the Alliance of Concerned Men.

Tune into the latest episode on iTunes or click here to listen to the conversation about the positive impact of prioritizing wellness for youth committed to juvenile justice – young people who experience a unique set of challenges in addition to teen growing pains.