



COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE



February 25, 2016

A Warm Welcome to...



our New DYRS Employees who started on February 22!

Tiye Kinlow, Law Clerk, 450 H. St.

Janaina Martins, Mental Health Specialist, NB

Please welcome them if you meet them around the agency!

EVENT CALENDAR

- 2/26-28** Reflections (Parents' Retreat)
Massanetta Springs,
712 Massanetta Springs Road
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
- 3/3** Performance Oversight Hearing,
1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, 10 a.m.
- 3/16** MLK Achievement Center Grand
Opening, 2101 MLK Jr. Avenue, SE
4 - 8 p.m.
- 3/18** Office of Secure Programs
Meet & Greet, NB Training Room
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

What Love Looks Like

On Sunday, February 14, employees at the Youth Services Center hosted a Valentine's Day event for our young men where they learned that love comes in many different forms.



Positive Staff Development



Credible Messenger Mentoring A Lesson in Community Reinvestment

Staff from all divisions of the agency came away with a deepened understanding of Director Clinton Lacey's plan for the Credible Messenger Initiative after undergoing training on February 16 and 17. The training served to: define Credible Messenger Mentoring; provide an understanding of the program components of Credible Messenger Mentoring; provide examples of what Credible Messenger Mentoring looks like; and identify Credible Messengers within the agency.

"The Credible Messenger Initiative" builds on Director Lacey's vision of "love in juvenile justice," said Charles Dotson, who is helping shape the program's structure. "True 'Credible Messengers' believe that every young person, regardless of their current condition or behavior, has unlimited potential and innate greatness; Young people don't care about how much you know until they know about how much you care."

Out of State, On Our Minds

On February 17, the Contracts Performance Monitoring Unit (CPMU) met with out-of-state Residential Treatment Centers (RTC) in an effort to enhance relationships, increase agency transparency and share information. The DYRS Case Management division gained valuable knowledge to aid in placing our youth, and RTCs learned about the community-based approach that the agency believes in.

DYRS Program Manager Jose Dearteaga contributed a guide to funding options for Medicaid processes and placement, and CPMU staff Nancy Fisher and Dr. Markeeta Barnes introduced an objective, outcome-based evaluation tool for assessing RTCs intended to improve performance by enhancing DYRS oversight, promoting vendor accountability and measuring program performance across key indicators.



Youth and staff discussed that – while Valentine's Day is a holiday typically portrayed as one for significant others – it's equally important to recognize parents, caregivers and those whose uplifting love and support play an important part in their development and progress. The young men created Valentines for their loved ones and also wrote out explanations of what love looks like in their lives. Special thanks to Youth Development Representative Mikkia Zanders for arranging the event to show our young people the love they're so deserving of.



YOUTH SNAPSHOTS



The DYRS Youth Council taking care of abused animals at Star Gazers Farm in Maryland.

Group Orientations for Employment Opportunities

The Office of Workforce Development (WFD) is conducting group orientations for all youth interested in unsubsidized employment opportunities. Please refer youth to the Online Referral Form (<http://tinyurl.com/gqp2zm>), and a WFD team member will respond within 48 hours to schedule an appointment. The orientation process takes approximately two to three hours, and consists of registration form completion, CASAS Testing and career assessment and planning.

Positive Youth Development



A Truth Hard to Swallow

Covenant of Peace organizers, facilitators and volunteers returned to the Youth Services Center on Saturday, February 20 to remind young women about the pillars they promised to adhere to at January's all girl Covenant of Peace event. 23 young ladies, and dozens of guests dedicated to ensuring our youth's commitment to nonviolence, focused on one of the pillars specific to the girls' event – "The Power of the Tongue."

The girls participated in dramatic play that focused on the power of words we use. What resonated most with the girls is remembering that the tongue is a strong muscle, and that words said have the power to build someone up or cut someone down. This realization heightened their sense of responsibility to each other as women, to the Covenant they signed, and to themselves.

DYRS Quarterly Networking Breakfast

On February 17, youth and staff attended DYRS' Quarterly Networking Breakfast at the Pepco Edison Place Gallery, where they met with more than 50 employers and talent acquisition consultants about possible employment opportunities and internships. Recruiters offered perspective on "Bridging the Gap between Education and Workforce".



A wide range of employers from different industries attended, including MGM National Harbor, CVS, Pregame and Postgame, President of Bowie State University Dr. Mickey Burnim and Pepco Holdings. We applaud our youth for their perseverance and the Office of Workforce Development for their efforts in helping our youth secure gainful employment.

