

Committed to Excellence

THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH REHABILITATION SERVICES (DYRS) NEWSLETTER

February 27, 2020



Event Calendar

- MAR 2** **ANCHORED IN STRENGTH** - 450 H STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC - 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM
- MAR 9** **ANCHORED IN STRENGTH** - 2101 MLK JR AVE SE
WASHINGTON, DC - 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
- MAR 11** **WPGC TOUR** - 450 H STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC - 4:30 PM
- MAR 16** **ANCHORED IN STRENGTH** - 450 H STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC - 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM
- MAR 20** **COMMUNITY SERVICE WITH PENNY APPEAL**
450 H STREET NW - 10 AM - 1:00 PM
- MAR 23** **ANCHORED IN STRENGTH** - 2101 MLK JR AVE SE
WASHINGTON, DC - 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
- MAR 28** **WOMEN'S DAY** - 2101 MLK JR AVE SE
9 AM - 1:00 PM
- MAR 30** **ANCHORED IN STRENGTH** - 450 H STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC - 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM



DYRS REGISTERS YOUTH FOR THE SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The DYRS Workforce Development Team has enrolled 58 youth for the Mayor Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSY-EP) during registration sessions in January. The six-week program will begin Monday, June 29th and end Friday, August 7th. Youth ages 14-24 are eligible for the program hosted by the DC Department of Employment Services (DOES) that offers enriching and constructive summer work experiences through subsidized placements in the private and government sectors.

DYRS will host 15 youth as interns to work in the Achievement Centers. They will either be assigned to work as a Restorative Justice intern or be trained to work as a barista in our Youth Café, which is part of our partnership with Starbucks. The other participating youth will have the opportunity to be placed at various job locations around the District, including sites that focus on recreation, childcare, food services, and the Federal government.

- Keith Whiteing, 450

JERRY M. COMPLETION

DC Superior Court Approves Agreement to End Court Oversight of Jerry M., the District's Oldest Consent Decree Case



On Wednesday, February 12th, the DC Superior Court approved a settlement that will end court oversight and monitoring in Jerry M., et al. v. District of Columbia, et al., a class action lawsuit filed on behalf of youth in the District's secure juvenile detention facilities. Originally filed in 1985, Jerry M. is the District's oldest consent decree case.

"The settlement agreement is a tremendous victory for our local autonomy and demonstrates the progress we have made to improve and strengthen the District's juvenile justice system," said Mayor Muriel Bowser. "I am confident that DYRS, under the leadership of Director Lacey, will continue to lead the way in engaging vulnerable District youth with evidence-based practices."

Since the lawsuit was filed, the District has taken numerous steps to strengthen its juvenile justice system, including creating the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) as a Cabinet-level agency; closing Oak Hill and opening modern facilities; improving the provision of a wide range of rehabilitative services in its secure facilities ranging from education to medical and behavioral health services; and increasing the safety and security of the facilities through evidence-based behavioral management practices and enhanced staff training and supervision.

"This settlement demonstrates how far the District has come in serving court-involved youth. Led by our vision, hope, resiliency and empowerment of youth and families, and grounded in the core principles of restorative justice, DYRS will continue provide the highest quality of services to the youth in our care," said DYRS Director Clinton Lacey. "I want to thank Mayor Bowser for her support, the DYRS staff for their commitment, our youth, families and community stakeholders for their partnership, as well as the Office of the Attorney General, Special Arbiter Grace Lopes, and the Plaintiffs' Counsel, in helping us reach this historic agreement."

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Youth from New Beginnings Tour Lincoln University



Committed Youth from the New Beginnings Youth Development Center (NBYDC) had the opportunity to tour Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. College tours allow the youth to see what the college experience has to offer firsthand and are a great way to motivate our youth to further their education and follow their dreams. They sat in on lectures that were in session, explored classrooms and learned a lot about the history of the university.

The youth not only got an opportunity to engage with the professors, staff members and current students, but also were able to observe the social environment of the students and have lunch with them. The most amazing thing about this tour was that one of our youth recently applied to attend Lincoln University after being inspired by the visit. This was a great opportunity to enlighten our youth about the college life and experience.

- Marjorie Temple, New Beginnings

YSC RESIDENT SHARES ARTISTIC TALENT



G., a 15-years-old Youth Services Center (YSC) Resident, began drawing at the tender age of 7 with no prior experience. He said that he has always had a love for drawing but has never taken it seriously until recently. G. likes to spend his down time drawing in his room. This sketch was inspired by the cover of the book *Broken Memory: a Novel of Rwanda* by Élisabeth Combres.

His artistic inspiration comes from his father, who creates sculptures. Preferring to draw freehand, O. said that he's interested in getting into painting. Since being at YSC, he has used drawing as his coping skill. Once discovering G.'s talent, YSC staff discussed all of the possibilities that his art could open up for him. G. is working on five additional pieces for Black History Month.

- Alexis Davis, YSC

THE DYRS ABSCONDENCE UNIT REACHES A RECORD LOW NUMBER



The DYRS Abscondence Unit reached a historic low number of four youth during the month of February. The unit works with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to go directly into the community to locate and return youth on abscondence.

"I'm extremely proud of the work that's being done and the partnerships that we've been able to build to get this number down to this level," said Adrian Richardson, who leads the unit. "We appreciate the resources that we've been able to use to locate youth and bring them back into the care of DYRS in a safe manner for their safety and well-being."

With a team of five members, the abscondence unit also deploys to youth who have or may have attempted to abscond, with the goal of verbally communicating with the youth and convincing him or her to return to the court-appointment placement. The abscondence unit, with help from the electronic monitoring program, responds to all critical incidents within the community.

- Adrian Richardson, 450

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



DYRS Celebrates Black History Month

DYRS celebrated Black History Month with a series of events throughout our four locations. For example, the Achievement Centers took youth to the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), the New Beginnings Youth Development Center (NBYDC) will host a Step Show this weekend, and the Youth Services Center hosted a Young Kings & Queens Poetry Slam.

Visit <https://www.facebook.com/dyrsdc/> to view pics from the events.

- Kandis Catalan, MLK Achievement Center

POSITIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT



YSC Celebrates its First Staff Incentive Program

The Youth Services Center (YSC) hosted its first Staff Incentives and Rewards Luncheon. Supervisory Youth Development Specialist (YDR) Kiana Richardson presented 36 staff members with personalized awards for achieving one year of perfect attendance as part of the Staff Incentive Program. The award recipients and guests were welcomed in red carpet fashion in the multi-purpose room for an awards luncheon. Management also acknowledged those with six months of perfect attendance for their achievements in time and attendance, youth engagement, team mindfulness, and encouraging other staff to contribute to improving employee morale and facility work dynamics.

- Keith Whiteing, 450

DYRS Announces New Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor



The Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) would like to announce the appointment of Alicia McNeal as the agency's new Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor. Ms. McNeal will be available to work with DC government employees and applicants alleging employment discrimination. Agency employees who wish to file a complaint with the Office of Human Rights (OHR) must first consult an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Counselor within 180 calendar days of the occurrence of discrimination or discovery of discrimination in order to attempt informal resolution.

Ms. McNeal is a program analyst within the Operations and Administrative Services Division and serves as the Executive Assistant to DYRS Chief Operating Officer Krista Scalise. Ms. McNeal can be reached via email at alicia.mcneal@dc.gov or by phone at 202-299-3104.