



Committed to Excellence

The Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) Biweekly Newsletter.

June 29, 2017



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

POSITIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

JERRY M. COMPLETION

Event Calendar

JUL 12 MPD "BEAT THE STREETS" EVENT
3800 DIX ST. SE (EAST RIVER)

AUG 11-13 COVENANT OF PEACE WEEKEND FOR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS, MEADOWKIRK
38012 DELTA FARM LANE, MIDDLEBURG, VA

OVERACHIEVERS

Congratulations Rahim Jenkins!

DYRS is proud to announce agency Administrative Officer Rahim Jenkins as one of five recipients of the distinguished Cafritz Award! The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Awards for Distinguished DC Government Employees is an annual program designed to recognize and reward outstanding performance and exemplary service by DC Government employees. DYRS applauds Rahim in his commitment to public service!

TRAINING - DAY -



Speaking My Language

On Tuesday, June 27 and Wednesday, June 28, staff and contractors from all areas of DYRS joined in Language Access Policy (LAP) training to better understand their roles in providing inclusive customer service to all citizens in the District. Agency LAP Coordinator Harpreet "Rodi" Moore spoke to the importance of providing individualized attention to non-English speaking citizens, while Amanda Petheruti from DYRS' Office of Research and Evaluation stated the importance of logging proficiency levels in data collection to better account for youth and their families who might require more focused attention. The takeaway - to be able to engage with all citizens as best as possible for a productive experience. DYRS thanks the DC Office of Human Rights for attending to speak about the importance of the policy, which started in 2004.



POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Stars in the Making

On Thursday, June 22, DYRS youth in the community joined together at Clyde's on 7th to commemorate their graduations (GED, high school and college) in a star-studded Academic Achievement Celebration. The youth posed as the true stars of the evening, complete with a red carpet, and adoring fans in all those who care about them, including: families; caregivers; DYRS staff, social workers and Credible Messenger mentors; Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Hyesook Chung; youths' social workers; and credible messenger mentors.

DYRS Chief of Staff Adam Aljoburi provided welcoming remarks, encouraging youth to meet their dreams and congratulating them for taking the first steps. The ceremony continued as DYRS staff members shared their thoughts, and 2017 DYRS college graduate, formerly committed K.C., provided wise words as they strive toward their next steps. "Procrastination is the assassination of opportunity," he said. "Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today."

The Class of 2017 worked diligently toward success. Their trials and tribulations included countless hours of studying and maintaining a positive outlook on furthering their education and improving their lives. As they embark on their next stages in life, DYRS is proud of them and supports them all the way.

DYRS Director Clinton Lacey said later in the evening, "We often ask the question - what does love look like in the juvenile justice system? Well it looks like this. You, here today - successful - surrounded by everyone who loves you, and people that you don't even know who love you. That's what love looks like."

Customized for the Capitol

The Tailored with Tim cohort worked on political dress code and etiquette on June 29 before being escorted to Capitol Hill for a tour of congress. DYRS' young people saw Congress in session and enjoyed being guided around the facility where they met numerous politicians, and even caught a glimpse of United States Vice President Mike Pence.



Check It!



DYRS Supports Ribbon Cutting in Ward 8

Check It Enterprises, a business venture of the Check Its, a former group of Washington DC LGBTQI individuals who had banded together for support and protection, opened the doors to its new Southeast D.C. Community Center on Tuesday, June 20.

The group held a grand opening and ribbon cutting of the center, where they design and sell clothing and other apparel. The ceremony included remarks from D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser, Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), Congressman Danny Davis (D-Ill.), Council member Trayon White (D-Ward 8), and DYRS Director Clinton Lacey.

The standing room-only event felt charged with support and excitement for these young people who made a conscious decision to turn their lives around and lead positive and productive lives.

Community activist Ronald Moten is a devoted mentor who provided support to these young people since they posed as an infamous gang that frequented the Chinatown area. Mr. Moten supported them through their transformation and in the development and filming of "Check It," a documentary about gay and transgender kids struggling to find a place for themselves in D.C. "Check It" profiles the rise of a local LGBTQI youth gang in DC with more than 200 members.

DYRS offered support to Check It Enterprises throughout the past few years. Most recently, the agency's very own Marco Wimberly, a Youth Development Representative, designed and painted the beautiful mural in the center.

In addition to the Check It Enterprises own clothing line, the organization will be giving back to the community by offering sex education and dance classes to other youth — resources that were not made readily available to the members of Check It when they were growing up.

Saturday Snapshot



Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Hyesook Chung and DYRS Director Clinton Lacey participate with youth in New Beginnings Youth Development Center's biweekly lawn care services for senior citizens in D.C.!



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Marching to the Beat

On June 28, DYRS participated in the annual "Beat the Streets" community event led by the Metropolitan Police Department and in partnership with several DC government agencies that provide services to our communities. Each agency set up stations on Congress Street, SE, offering fun giveaways, public information, and plenty of great opportunities for the Ward 8 community. Attendees enjoyed free food, snacks, games and entertainment including rappers, poets, a double-dutch contest and a school marching band! These events will continue for the next few weeks at the following locations to promote safety, community partnership, information sharing and cultural pride:

- July 12 - 3800 Dix St. SE (East River)
- July 19 - 1599 Maryland Ave St. NE (Straburst)
- July 26 - 4100 9th St. NW (Petworth)
- August 2 - 100 L St. NE (NoMa) Pilot
- August 9 - 115 Atlantic St. SW (Bellevue Library)



POSITIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Social Studies

On June 19, in an effort to build rapport between social workers, scholars, and treatment staff, New Beginnings Youth Development Center created a great team-building experience that gave community staff an opportunity to participate in a fun day of games, crafts, and photos with their youth. This provided an open forum for communication, advocacy, and confronting any potential crisis situations. Staff and youth alike found that – through the activities offered – they strengthened their channels in overcoming obstacles. The day served to remind all those who impact our youth that increasing opportunities and improving resources for those we serve is a shared responsibility.



Coming Full Circle

DYRS employees attended the 6th Annual Association of Community & Restorative Justice in Oakland, California from June 16-June 18, where they engaged in some of more than 200 presentations that explored what justice is, what it means, and what it requires in our lives, communities, and institutions. Among those who attended included Senior Youth Development Representative (SYDR) Lashaun Jones, SYDR William Young, New Beginnings Deputy Superintendent Mark Hamlett, as well as Tammy Fenton, Dean of Students at Maya Angelou Academy.

Some of the workshop topics that staff found particularly compelling are:

- Restorative Justice Indigenous Roots - which discussed how though most think of restorative justice as a contemporary way of resolving conflict, it is actually a way of life that is inspired by indigenous worldviews;
- Youth Led Circle Training - which explained how youth becoming a part of your restorative team can be a great communication asset; and
- Hip Hop & Restorative Justice to Free Our Minds - which incorporated how using hip hop as an ice breaker to ignite conversations with youth is great tool.

Social justice icons Angela Davis and Erika Huggins served as keynote speakers for the event. All DYRS staff returned to work with a renewed understanding of restorative justice and best practices to implement into their every day work.