



# Committed to Excellence

The Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) Biweekly Newsletter, November 30, 2017



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

POSITIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FAMILY EMPOWERMENT

JERRY M. COMPLETION

## Event Calendar

- DEC 5** OPEN ENROLLMENT  
1101 4TH ST. SW - 10AM - 3PM
- DEC 6** OPEN ENROLLMENT  
1133 NORTH CAPITOL ST. NE - 10AM - 3PM
- DEC 9** MAYA ANGELOU ACADEMY  
OPEN HOUSE & AWARDS CEREMONY  
8400 RIVER RD., LAUREL, MD, 12-2 PM
- DEC 11-15** NEW BEGINNINGS STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK
- DEC 13** DYRS EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION EVENT  
WASHINGTON DC, 3-5:30 PM
- DEC 19** INOVA EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)  
SEMINAR, THE YOUTH SERVICES CENTER (YSC),  
1000 MT. OLIVET RD NE, WASHINGTON 20002  
1-2 PM



## POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

### The Art of Listening, Thanks, and Giving

Traditions abound as families of youth at the Youth Services Center (YSC) and New Beginnings Youth Development Center came together at gatherings and enjoyed Thanksgiving celebrations with the residents. One prevailing theme this holiday season proves to be the thankfulness of being able to have a voice, speak out loud, and for others to listen attentively.

The YSC celebration on Thanksgiving day started off with opening remarks from Superintendent Jannifer Nevilles, and ceremonial introductions by Youth Development Representative (YDR) Bridges. YSC residents Z.H., D.N., T.M. and S.P. treated guests to original spoken word poems. Each young person demonstrated poise and courage and recited spoken word poems as their families and peers cheered them on. Knowing that the holidays are especially difficult for our young people, staff at all levels of the Youth Services Center make an extra effort to provide residents with love and care as they are away from their families.

On Tuesday, November 21, scholars at the Maya Angelou Academy at New Beginnings Youth Development Center participated in their annual speech competition followed by a holiday dinner. Having learned about the influence of words in their "Unit 2: Power in English" class and after exploring the elements of speech writing through reading and watching well-known and powerful speakers, scholars created their own speeches on the topics of their choice - practicing the art of writing to be understood and using strategies of persuasion like ethos, logos and pathos to inform and influence the opinions of others. The scholars represented themselves and their peers proudly. Youth J.C. won the competition, with S.H. coming in a strong second place, and D.W. a solid third. All of the scholars celebrated their accomplishments afterwards with staff and family at a Thanksgiving meal, finding no better reason to give thanks than to being able to stand up, have their voices heard and let their power shine. Maya Angelou Academy and DYRS offer special thanks to English teachers Samantha Scioli, Jessica Julius, and Ms. Barbara O'Neal, as well as Ms. Kym Jasper for her administrative support.

DYRS thanks all staff, stakeholders, and caregivers for continuing to remember that our youth are a part of our community by caring about them, sharing in celebration with them, and more importantly, reminding them that they deserve to be listened to.



Open Enrollment 2018 ends on Monday, December 11, 2017! Don't miss out on your annual opportunity to review your current benefit elections and make any changes. The final two Open Enrollment Fairs are from 10 am - 3pm on:

12/5 - 1101 4th St. SW, and

12/6 - 1133 North Capitol St. NE

For more information, please visit:  
<https://dchr.dc.gov/page/employee-benefits>

# Jay-Z & Justice

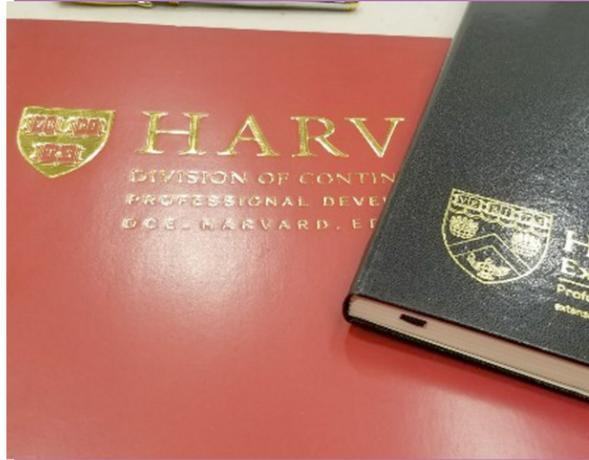
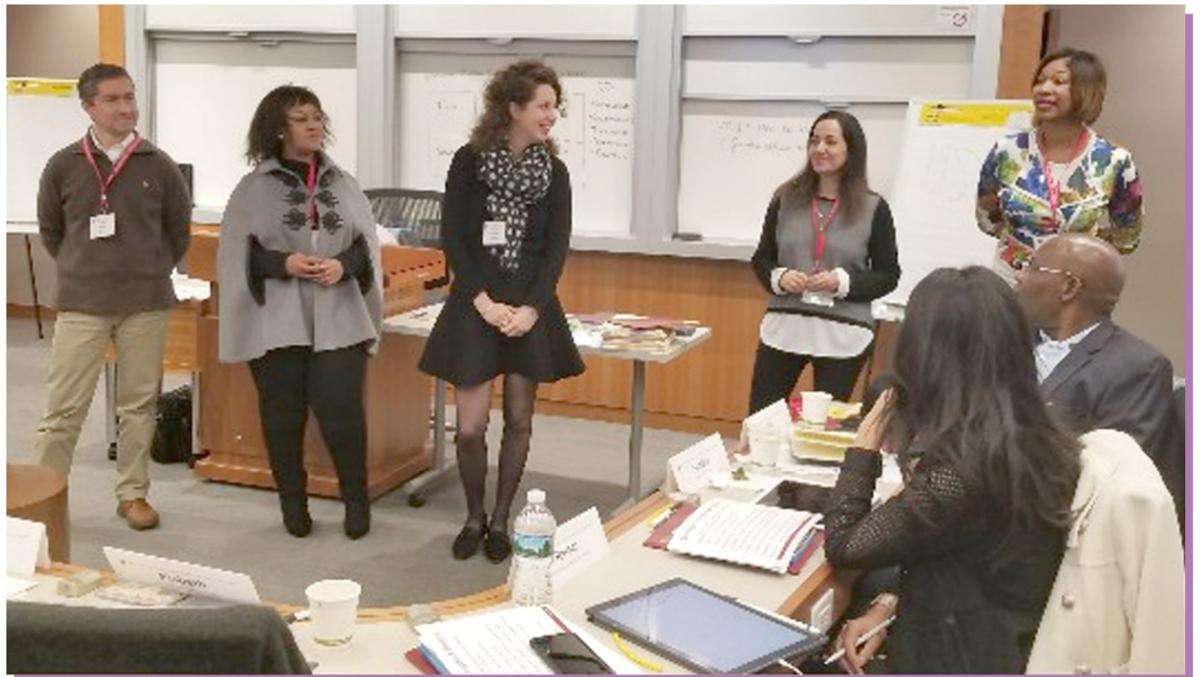


With the city all abuzz with talks of Jay-Z performing at the Capital One Center, DYRS felt it important to implement a teaching moment for our young people.

On Monday, November 29, the agency hosted prominent community activist Ron Moten; DJ QuickSilva from 93.9FM; Gabriel Benn, Hip Hop artist and youth activist (and widely known for hikes appearances on the Boondocks); and author Patricia LaFontant. Our guests engaged our young people in a group discussion that explored the themes of Jay-Z's highly acclaimed "4:44" album and participated in dialogue about self-empowerment, shame, forgiveness, pride, and wealth building.

The dialogue is so relevant to our young people, and with Jay-Z recently using his voice to loudly speak out about the injustices of the criminal justice system and the need for reform, he launched the national discussion forward. Jay-Z raised awareness among the hip-hop community and is encouraging others to use their voice for social justice reform.

DYRS welcomes Jay-Z to the Nation's Capital and looks forward to your continued positive impact on our young people and our communities!



## POSITIVE STAFF DEVELOPMENT

### Agency Leaders Head To Harvard

Last month, DYRS agency leaders headed to Harvard to become students of change implementation.

Headed to what's known as the world's most influential university, Senior Deputy Director Linda Harlee Harper and her team of Deputies - Garine Dalce, Willie Fullilove, and Krista Scalise – set out to Cambridge to participate in an intensive three-day learning experience.

As the agency consistently works towards successful reform, the group participated in a course titled "Strategies for Leading Successful Change Initiatives," which offered meaningful context towards the need for change, how to embrace it, and how to make positive change last.

"At DYRS, we are always looking to improve and enhance service delivery to our youth and families that we serve," said Senior Deputy Director Harlee Harper. Our team of talented staff and invested community stakeholders are full of innovative ideas to reach our youth and to end the cycle of violence in our communities. We, as agency leaders, have to be able to embrace the ideas and support their successful implementation. This work we do is too important. We have to always be in a posture to learn and grow and to try new approaches with improved outcomes."

"I wanted us to learn from the best and Harvard is that," continued Harlee Harper. We were in class with change agents from around the world who are responsible for leading change initiatives within their organizations. By attending the course as a team, we returned with shared visions, concepts and strategies that we will use to impact across our agency, and ultimately our youth and families and the District."



The DYRS executive cabinet met at the Youth Services Center on November 28 for the last round of this year's employee town halls. Direct care and administrative staff showed up around the clock to engage with Director Clinton Lacey and the executive team, each member of leadership there to provide the answers to any questions in their respective divisions.