

Juvenile Justice Report

The official newsletter of the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor | Neil Hernandez, Commissioner



Horizon Kids 'Kick-it' With New York Red Bulls

More than 100 juvenile residents meet Red Bulls, face-off in soccer game during first-ever youth sports clinic

On Monday, August 21st, more than 100 kids at the Horizon Juvenile Center faced off against members of the New York Red Bulls first team and the Red Bulls Academy teams in a championship soccer clinic and tournament.

The first-ever program featured some of the most recognized past and present members of the New York Red Bulls soccer team, including Giovanni Savarese and Stephanie Sabaliauskas, who instructed juvenile residents on the sport of soccer, game rules, scoring and techniques. The clinic culminated in a championship tournament between teams comprised of residents, staff and Red Bulls team members in the facility's internal recreation field.

"This first-ever professional soccer clinic featured world-class athletes and enabled kids in detention to experience this exciting sport first-hand," DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez said. "Thanks to the New York Red Bulls, more than 100 young *continued on p.2*



Stephanie Sabaliauskas demonstrates soccer strategy for female residents during New York Red Bulls soccer clinic.

Matthew Sapolin Delivers Keynote Address at Class of 2006 Graduation Ceremony



Commissioner Matthew Sapolin delivers keynote address at graduation ceremony for new employees. Sapolin's dog guide, Compass, looks on.

On Friday, July 7th, the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice hosted its second ceremony and reception of the year commemorating the graduation of an incoming class of new employees. This graduating class included Juvenile Counselors and a Case Manager who had completed their training and who have since been deployed throughout DJJ's facilities to support the agency's operations.

As in the past, the graduation ceremony took place in the

Saval Auditorium at St. John's University in Manhattan, with a reception immediately following in the Trustees Hall of Fame.

Matthew Sapolin, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities, delivered the keynote *continued on p.2*

DJJ Hosts Health & Mental Health Care Forum

On July 18th, the Department of Juvenile Justice held a forum titled "Inside/Outside: The Health and Mental Health Care Needs of Youth in Detention" at Baruch College School of Public Affairs in Manhattan.

The forum, moderated by Assistant Commissioner for Program Services, Nina Aledort, focused on youth who are detained in Juvenile Justice facilities and the array of challenges and opportunities they present for health and mental health care providers.

This transient population represents some of the youth at highest risk for future poor health outcomes. Entry into detention presents an opportunity to assess, treat, educate and connect youth and their families to care in their communities. While much attention has been paid to the health care issues facing adults in prison, there has been less of a dialogue on the unique issues facing youth in detention.

The event provided an opportunity for community groups, DJJ staff, Judges, stakeholders, advocates, partner organizations and medical and mental health providers to begin a dialogue about these and related issues.

Forum presenters offered a range of information on the population and services. Michael Cohen, MD, Medical Director, NYS Office of Children and Family *continued on p.3*

City Council Visits Horizon Youth

On Monday, June 20th, a joint visit of the Horizon Juvenile Center took place by members of the City Council's Juvenile Justice and Women's Issues Committee, led by Executive Director Ed Marcial, which included Juvenile Justice Chair Sara Gonzalez and Brooklyn Council Member Darlene Mealy, as well as Council staff members.



Council Member Sara Gonzalez tours Horizon Juvenile Center.

Horizon's Executive Director Ed Marcial said, "We were very pleased to provide an in-depth perspective of our daily operations and insight into the dedication of Horizon staff and the positive impact we can have on the lives of our residents."

The tour's focus was to see first-hand the services provided for detained youth and meet the Department's committed staff. The tour included presentations by facility staff and partners like the Education Department, which was represented by Passages Academy Principal Sydney Blair, Assistant Principal Mike Blake and several DOE staffers.

The Council Members talked to youth and participated in a workshop in the Special Support Dorm where Juvenile Counselors Lorraine Anderson and Rosalind Smith were on duty, while Sisterlink of Hunter College's Center for Community and Urban Health conducted a personal hygiene workshop for the girls. Both Council Members Gonzalez and Mealy actively participated in engaging the youth along with staff.

"As Chair of the Juvenile Justice Committee, I am pleased to have been joined by Commissioner Hernandez and Councilwoman Darlene Mealy, my colleague from the Women's Issues Committee. Through interviews with all key staff members and one-on-ones with program participants,

valuable insight was provided for both Committees," New York City Council Member Sarah Gonzalez said. "The day served to reaffirm my belief that troubled youth can view this facility not as a destination, but as a vehicle to a better life."

The City Council visitors also ate lunch with residents in the cafeteria. Through her leadership, this year the City Council allocated \$1.279 million dollars to DJJ for youth programming. Presently, eight community-based organizations are providing summer and school year programming for youth focusing on Girls and Boys' Leadership, Visual Arts, and Tutorials in Math and Reading for detained youth before the start of the school year. ■

Horizon Kids *continued from p.1*

people were able to meet recognizable role models and compete in a positive, fun and exciting soccer competition."

"Our thanks go to the New York Red Bulls for providing DJJ residents with a well received soccer clinic," Horizon Recreation Director Earl Knight said.



Horizon residents score goals and demonstrate athletic ability during Red Bulls soccer clinic.

In addition to providing an innovative recreational opportunity for children in detention, the clinic was intended to help make a positive intervention in the lives of residents who might otherwise never have the chance to have personal interaction with world-class athletes and contemporary sports stars.

In September, the New York Red Bulls will be presenting a clinic for residents in Non-Secure Detention.

In recent months, juveniles at DJJ facilities have been visited by Craig Pearce, screenwriter for *Strictly Ballroom*, *Romeo and Juliet* and Academy Award winning film *'Moulin Rouge,'* urban artist James De La Vega, and magician David Blaine. ■

Class of 2006 *continued from p.1*

address for the ceremony. Commissioner Sapolin detailed the agency's mission and the important role the new graduates would play not only in advancing the agency's role, but also in positively impacting the lives of the young people involved in the juvenile justice system.

Sapolin, who was appointed Executive Director of the Office of People with Disabilities by Mayor Bloomberg in 2002, was elevated to the rank of Commissioner by the Mayor during a ceremony celebrating the 16th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act last month. ■



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Kids Embrace Diversity at SEEDS Summer Festival

SEEDS presented its fifth annual Multi-Cultural Fair at Crotona Park on August 14th. Featuring tropical flavored ices at the Antarctica table, the smell of jerk chicken, festive booth displays, colorful balloons, music, and flags from around the world surrounding the area as if the United Nations had moved to the Bronx. The fair was the premiere event of the SEEDS summer program.

SEEDS, DJJ's Non-Secure Detention operation, is comprised of 18 group homes and provides care to an average 146 juveniles a day.

For the past four years, SEEDS has sought to provide insight and interpretation through the development of the Multi-Cultural parade. The parade has grown significantly over time and last year changed to a fair. To SEEDS residents, it is a celebration of cultural harmony and unity.

For the event, SEEDS facilities adopted countries and cultures from as close as Canada, to as far as the Middle East. Some of those countries represented included Egypt, Panama, Turkey, Ecuador, Guyana and others. Residents were responsible for research and having a clear understanding of the culture, history, religion, geography, meaning of the flag, government, food, dance, and music for those nations.

From their research and creativity, each facility created informational booths designed to inform visitors about their adopted country and culture. Booths were decorated with informational literature and leaflets, flags, balloons and tablecloths that matched the colors of the flag, and pictures highlighting the people and geography of each.

The fair ended with SEEDS facilities Outreach (Guyana) and Plimpton (India) performing their adopted country's native dance in native clothing.

DJJ thanks Jamel Nedderman and Louis Watts for organizing this event. ■

Mental Health Forum *continued from p. 1*

Services gave an overview of the health status of youth in detention in New York State. Gail Wasserman, Ph.D., Director, Center for the Promotion of Mental Health in



DJJ Commissioner Hernandez speaks at Juvenile Justice Forum sponsored by the Correction Association of New York.

Commissioner's Message



by
Neil Hernandez

I begin my message by thanking all staff for their actions during the heat emergency. The high temperatures placed a tremendous burden on the City, and tragically some lost their lives. Despite the challenges, all of you ensured that Agency operations continued uninterrupted for the benefit of our youth and staff.

During the summer, staff also pitched in and helped provide summer programming to residents. These efforts are being complemented by eight community-based organizations that began in August by providing workshops in Girls Leadership, Boys Leadership, and Visual Arts, as well as tutorials for youth needing assistance with reading and math so they are better prepared for the upcoming school year.

While preparing for the school year - at both home and in the facilities - the Agency is also readying itself to move its headquarters in the Fall. With the investments DJJ has been making in staffing, our ranks have grown and the current headquarters need to be upgraded. The new location is a modern and easily accessible space that will be conducive to providing better customer service to all employees and administrative support to enhance services to young people.

I look forward to this important milestone for both the Agency and staff. ■

Juvenile Justice, Columbia University, spoke on effective models of mental health/juvenile justice collaborations. Jim Horne, DO, Medical Director, Pyramid Reception Center and MercyFirst, outlined the issues facing practitioners in providing a continuity of care of youth both in and out of detention. Finally, Farah Parvez, MD, Medical Director, Correctional Public Health Services, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, discussed the public health opportunities in detention.

The opening address was delivered by Professor Jack Krauskopf, who has held several public sector positions including Administrator/Commissioner for the NYC Human Resources Administration, and is currently a Distinguished Lecturer at the Baruch College School of Public Affairs.

More than 100 people attended the event, and joined in lively discussion following the presentations. ■

Crossroads Residents Author And Produce Original Stage Production, 'Through Our Eyes'

On August 10th, 28 Passages Academy students at Crossroads Juvenile Center performed in an original student-written play, "Through Our Eyes." The play included five student-written plays that were connected through a video monologue that was shown via rear projection. The production was part of a comprehensive Summer Performing Arts program that focused on project-based learning, including dance, animation, film production, costume design, sound and music, art, set construction, painting, lighting, and acting.

A teacher and student leader directed each mode of expression over a six-week schedule during the months of July and August.

These modes included five doors on wheels, each depicting a specific play detailed through post-colonial symbolism and visual imagery, two student-written original songs, one student-directed music video, three student-directed animated short films, a 36 foot mural based on themes from each play, a 500 cardboard box set that depicted a local urban community and specific locations from each play, original costumes that were



Resident artwork makes for stellar stage presentation of 'Through Our Eyes' at Crossroads Juvenile Center.

constructed by Ms. Smith and residents Marlene and Shakima. In addition, students collaborated and worked with artists from A.C.C.I.D. and MoMA summer arts programming on various art projects related to the performance and the construction of the set.

In addition, each play was performed live through incorporating video of flashback scenes, animation, acting, modern

dance, Hip-Hop dance and step dance techniques. More than 72 students took part in at least one workshop during the Summer Performing Arts program and assisted in some aspect of the production.

Teachers who directed an area within the Summer Performing Arts project included John Scott, Gary Johnson, Andrew Brown, Fathia Touray, Michelle White, Shawnee Barbosa, Crystal Stewart, Crystal Waiters, Stefan Barbic, and Devin Smalls. The production was part of a comprehensive program to increase student literacy practices through the performing arts and was coordinated by Sean Turner and Ron Carter, Assistant Principal. ■

DJJ Moves Its Headquarters To William Street

Later this year, the NYC Department of Juvenile Justice will find its Central Office headquarters at 110 William Street in downtown Manhattan.

The move is the latest step in a long-term plan to better serve the public and the needs of DJJ's young people involved in the criminal justice system.

The Department's new headquarters will occupy a commercial building owned by Swig Equities that was built in 1958, has 868,000 square feet throughout 32 floors, and contains major tenants, such as The New York City Economic Development Corporation, New York City Housing Development Corporation and American International Group, Inc.

The move will be implemented in two phases. On an interim basis, the Department will be located on the 20th floor while permanent space is renovated on the entire 13th floor and part of the 14th floor. The Department is expected to remain in its temporary space for approximately nine months to one year.

Coordination for the move will involve collaboration with multiple City agencies and vendors, such as the Department

of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS), Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Department of Information and Technology (DOITT), Department of Sanitation (DSNY), Department of Records and Information Systems (DORIS), Verizon and XO Communications. This project is being coordinated through the Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Administration & Policy.



DJJ's new headquarters at 110 William Street.

"The logistics involved in ensuring that all aspects of this project are timed properly can be overwhelming at times. However, this project presents a wonderful opportunity for our agency to address its space needs," Deputy Commissioner Carlos A. Serrano said. "It is an honor for me to be involved in advocating and delivering on a much needed resource for our agency."

In addition to providing enhanced accessibility and consumer space, the new office venue will offer countless new shopping, dining and transportation options for agency employees.

The former Central Office at 365 Broadway will be redeveloped into residential space. ■