

# Juvenile Justice Report

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

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor

Winter 2003

Neil Hernandez, Commissioner



DJJ Special Officer Marvin Townsend at Mayor's press conference promoting EITC.

## DJJ Employee Part of Mayor's Earned Income Tax Credit Awareness Campaign

DJJ Special Officer Marvin Townsend spoke at a December press conference at Federal Hall announcing the Mayor's campaign to increase the number of New Yorkers who file for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). Townsend, who is assigned to the Bridges Juvenile Center, discussed his enthusiasm about receiving the refund (something his regular tax preparer had missed) and encouraged other city employees to apply. Commissioner Hernandez was present with Townsend at the press conference.

The EITC returns federal and state government dollars to filers either through tax credits or as cash refunds to working families who earn less than \$34,178. There are approximately 230,000 New York City residents who qualify for the federal and state EITC but do not file. When the 25% state match was included, the average combined EITC credit for 2002 was \$2,107 and some families received a credit of as much as \$5,278.

"If everyone who is eligible filed for the EITC, it would put \$500 million into the pockets of New Yorkers who need it the most," said Mayor Bloomberg.

Using the slogan "It's Your Money, Come and Get It," the City's awareness campaign aims to inform eligible New Yorkers about the benefits of filing for the EITC through mass outreach and makes free tax preparation centers available throughout the City.

Those eligible for the EITC are working families, with more than one child, earning less than \$34,178 annually; families with one child, earning less than \$30,201 annually; and individuals 24 years of age and older making less than \$11,060 annually. In 2002, the combined EITC, which includes

*Continued on page 2*

## Mayor's Message

By Michael R. Bloomberg

During the first year of my administration, New York has built upon its reputation as the safest large City in the United States. The crime rate has decreased steadily despite increasing nationally and the City's quality of life has improved thanks to new initiatives designed to combat excessive noise and graffiti. New York City has experienced a tremendously successful year in providing safety and security to its citizens while the fiscal crisis required each agency to cut its budget significantly.



We have made our public safety agencies more efficient and gotten better results while spending less money. Not only have we done more with less, we have done quite well with less. This shows that one should judge government and the quality of services by the commitment of its employees and the results it achieves, and not the amount we spend.

Some look to the future and see uncertainty. New Yorkers look to the future and see the promise of the world's greatest city and the commitment of its people to promoting a greater quality of life for our families and our neighbors.

I am proud of our public safety record and the Department of Juvenile Justice has played an important role in achieving these accomplishments. I know we can all appreciate the unique challenges of working with young people, especially those in the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

The men and women of DJJ perform

*Continued on page 2*

## Mayor's Message

Continued from page 1

important and complex services for the City and also play a critical role in the lives of the young people with whom you come in contact. I share your hope that by providing them with skills, opportunities and positive role models, you help make sure that their first contact with the justice system is also their last.

I am confident that under the leadership of Commissioner Neil Hernandez, the Department of Juvenile Justice and its employees will continue to build upon our accomplishments, protecting our citizens and promoting public safety in every borough.

I want to express my appreciation for your hard work and I thank you for your continuing effort and commitment to protecting public safety in the City of New York.



### Juvenile Justice Report

Published by the  
New York City  
Department of Juvenile Justice

Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

Neil Hernandez  
Commissioner

Scott Trent  
Director of Public Affairs

365 Broadway  
New York, NY 10013  
(212) 925-7779, ext. 205  
Website: [www.nyc.gov/nyc.djj](http://www.nyc.gov/nyc.djj)

## Tax Credit

Continued from page 1



Marvin Townsend and Commissioner Hernandez at EITC press conference.

the 25% match from New York State, paid a maximum of \$479 to childless taxpayers, \$3,195 to taxpayers with one child and \$5,278 to taxpayers with two or more children. The average combined EITC credit is \$2,107. Eligible New Yorkers could receive almost \$500 million in credits if they filed for the EITC.

Townsend, who readily admits he used a portion of his refund to purchase a large-screen television to watch football with, is currently filming a public service announcement with the Department of Consumer Affairs which will promote the EITC refund program in time for tax season.

Sponsored by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, Consumer Affairs Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra and City Council Speaker Gifford Miller, the event featured two City employees, including Special Officer Townsend, who had already benefited from the EITC. DJJ will advance the EITC campaign by reaching out to staff and to the families of the youth in our custody.

For more information on the EITC, please contact the DCA hotline at (212) 487-4444 in English, (212) 487-4481 in Spanish or visit the New York City Department of Consumer Affairs website at [www.nyc.gov/consumers](http://www.nyc.gov/consumers).

## DJJ Youth Take Part in Election Day Program

On Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, nearly 100 residents from Non-Secure Detention participated in Youth Election Day, a program designed to familiarize them with the voting process and permit them to cast their ballot in a mock election for Governor and State Attorney General.

Juveniles were selected to portray Republican, Democrat, Independent and Libertarian party candidates for Governor and State Attorney General. Each "candidate" studied the actual candidate's platform regarding youth issues and gave a presentation.

The all-day program included voter registration and skits focused on the history of voting and voting rights in the U.S. Skits were followed by a briefing on the duties and responsibilities of the Governor and Attorney General, as well as a mock debate between student candidates.

Votes cast by the juveniles revealed interesting results. In the election for Governor, Libertarian party candidate Scott Jeffrey received nearly half of all votes cast, followed by Carl McCall, Tom Golisano and George Pataki. In the juvenile election for New York State Attorney General, Democratic candidate Eliot Spitzer defeated Republican Dora Irizarry.

The Election Day program was planned and implemented by NSD Executive Director Migdalia Cortes and Beach Avenue Executive Director Sonia Galarza.

## **DJJ Commissioner Hernandez Thanks Federal Employees on Anniversary of September 11<sup>th</sup>**

On September 10, 2002, DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez represented the Mayor at the New York Federal Executive Board's commemoration of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Over 2,500 people who attended the ceremony held at the Lafayette Street Plaza of the Jacob K. Javits Federal Building listened as the Commissioner expressed the City's gratitude for the assistance that Federal government employees provided, both on September 11<sup>th</sup> and in the year after the tragedy. The Commissioner expressed similar sentiments following the event during an on-location interview with Spanish language radio station WADO.

Under the umbrella of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, many federal agency employees came together to support the massive recovery efforts in the aftermath of the 9-11 tragedy. These included the Small Business Administration which helped with the needs of Lower Manhattan small businesses, the Social Security Administration with victims and their families, and the General Services Administration which provided needed goods and services, among others.

In line with the City's September 11<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ceremony, DJJ conducted a number of activities throughout our facilities to mark the first anniversary of the tragedy. In addition to observing a moment of silence at 8:46 a.m., activities were sponsored to pay tribute to the victims and heroes of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Among the commemorative activities held at DJJ's three secure and 14 non-secure detention facilities and

### **Commissioner's Message**

*By Neil Hernandez*



It is an honor to serve under Michael R. Bloomberg, the 108<sup>th</sup> Mayor of the City of New York. I also consider it a privilege to have worked with all of you in the past and now to serve as your Commissioner. In our first 12 months, the dedicated men and women at DJJ who protect public safety and provide care for our residents every day have already accomplished so much.

We are in the midst of the most difficult fiscal crisis in recent memory, much of it brought about by the tragic events of September 11, 2001. As a result, Mayor Bloomberg has challenged us to "do more with less" and DJJ has met that challenge.

During the past year, the Department of Juvenile Justice has made strides in improving the quality of custody and care provided to our residents. Through the implementation of the Learning Enhancement and Adjustment Program (LEAP), more than 300 employees have received behavioral and mental health training, enhancing their work performance. We have also reduced assaults on staff by 43% while at the same time conducting more than 50,000 searches, recovering weapons and contraband, and creating safer environments for our staff and residents.

In Non-Secure Detention, we have developed a leadership program called S.E.E.D.S. or Sowing Encouragement and Education to Develop Skills. This initiative was designed to promote academic excellence and teamwork and draw out natural talent, enabling our young people to realize the full range of options open to them. In addition, through our Community Based Intervention activities such as the anti-graffiti effort and providing meals to senior citizens and homeless men and women, we have had a positive impact on the quality of life for our fellow New Yorkers.

At DJJ, we share a bond that doesn't end with each work shift. Events such as the agency picnic and our holiday party have provided us an opportunity to relieve the pressures of a 24-hour a day operation, build on our working relationship with each other and increase the level of camaraderie we share.

In closing, I thank you for your tireless efforts and dedicated service over the past year and I look forward to working with you in 2003.

Central Office were the creation of a memorial blanket with images representative of the courage and services rendered on September 11, 2001, the erection of a wall of remembrance, creation of a memorial garden, and essay and poetry contests.



*DJJ Commissioner Hernandez speaks at ceremony honoring Federal employees.*

## **Mayor Bloomberg Declares New York City the Safest Large City in the Nation**

At a December 17, 2002 City Hall press conference, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg outlined his administration's first year public safety accomplishments. Chief among them was ranking New York City the safest large City in the country.

"We have defied the national trend and made New York City even safer as we have cut our budget," the Mayor said. "While New York City's crime rate has been driven to its lowest level since 1963, other cities like Boston, Los Angeles, and Houston have experienced increases in their crime rates between 2.6% and 10.6%."

Accompanied by his public safety commissioners, Mayor Bloomberg also highlighted other notable 2002 public safety and quality of life accomplishments achieved by City agencies. They include NYPD's success in reducing the City's overall crime rate by 6%, FDNY's improvement of its fire response time by 3 seconds, the Department of Probation's clearance of twice as many warrants in 2002, an increase of 4,574, and the Department of Correction's reduction in inmate assaults on staff members by 22%. Of particular relevance to the Department of Juvenile Justice was the Mayor's acknowledgment that the agency had significantly reduced attacks on its staff members by 43%.

The 2002 public safety announce-

ment also included quality of life achievements for New Yorkers and increased protections against the threat of terrorism. Mayor Bloomberg also commended the Human Rights Commission settlement of 137 cases, resulting in payments totaling \$1 million to victims of discrimination. In our communities, the Mayor's Anti-Graffiti initiative resulted in 1,100 cleanups that covered such areas as the Grand Concourse in the Bronx and Borough Park in Brooklyn. The Office of Emergency Management also conducted four emergency preparedness drills to ensure the City's coordinated and immediate response to terrorist threats and acts of terrorism.

In summing up his administration's overall public safety accomplishments, Mayor Bloomberg said "In 2002, we have made our public safety agencies more efficient and gotten better results while spending less money. Not only have we done more with less, we have done quite well with less."



*Mayor Bloomberg with commissioners at 2002 public safety press conference*

### **DJJ's 2002 SAFETY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The New York City Department of Juvenile Justice made several key operational accomplishments in calendar year 2002. The most significant among these include:

- *Assaults on staff were reduced by 43%, providing a safer working environment for agency personnel.*
- *Fights among youth were reduced by 27%, generating substantial savings in medical and staff costs arising out of incidents of violence in DJJ facilities.*
- *More than 300 employees, the majority of DJJ's direct child care workers, received critical behavioral and mental health training under the Department's Learning Enhancement and Adjustment Program (LEAP).*
- *DJJ performed 55,927 searches, increasing the Department's contraband and weapon recovery rate by 37%.*

## Magician David Blaine Performs for Bridges Residents

By Darlene Jorif and  
Jamel Nedderman

Magic was in the air when renowned magician David Blaine appeared not once, but twice at the Bridges Juvenile Center in 2002. Without fanfare or entourage, "The Magic Man" performed card tricks and illusions for residents at Bridges on June 28, 2002 and December 18, 2002.

For several years, Blaine has taken time from his busy schedule to bring amusement, amazement, and words of wisdom to residents at the Bridges Juvenile Center.

Residents immediately recognized Blaine from his TV specials and asked probing questions, seeking to determine if he is a highly skilled illusionist or if he truly can conjure up forces of magic. Blaine let them judge for themselves.



David Blaine performs at Bridges

During both of his visits to DJJ, the world-renowned magician rejected the typical setting of chairs arranged in a circle. Instead, he wanted to interact with the residents where they became part of the show.

Staff members and residents alike marveled at Blaine's mastery of magic. During each appearance, the magician presented more than a dozen close-up performances.

"We are always pleased and honored to have David Blaine visit

Bridges," said Executive Director Dennis Anyata. "His performances have a very positive effect on our youth and never fail to leave both residents and staff-members amazed by his abilities."

Blaine's comfortable style and broad selection of tricks were very well received. He also signed playing cards and posed for photographs before disappearing, leaving residents and staff thoroughly entertained and with plenty to ponder until his next visit.

## There's No Place Like DJJ for the Holidays!

The spirit of the season was visible everywhere as DJJ held its annual holiday celebration at Café Remy on December 18<sup>th</sup>. Located just south of Ground Zero in downtown Manhattan, the event drew more than 200 past and present employees, family members and colleagues from other agencies for dinner, conversation and holiday merriment. The celebration was held at no cost to employees and was intended to express the agency's appreciation for the dedicated efforts of all DJJ staff. The mission was accomplished as staff from all facilities and tours turned out to spread holiday cheer.

The party attracted former DJJ employees, including Kay Murray, Sheila Greene, Jan English and Eric Zimiles and special guests NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez, Department of Youth and Community Development Commissioner Jeanne Mullgrav, NYCHA General Manager Doug Apple, and Michelle Pinnock-Clerk.

## 2002

### EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH

#### Horizon Juvenile Center:

##### JANUARY

MARISOL SANCHEZ – SERGEANT, SPECIAL OFFICER

##### FEBRUARY

RENEE JONES – FOOD SERVICE

##### MARCH

JULIUS ANOKWURU – JUVENILE COUNSELOR

##### APRIL

ANGEL PASTRANA – JUVENILE COUNSELOR

##### MAY

ZACHARY LEWIS – JUVENILE COUNSELOR

##### JUNE

VANDORA PANKY-ROBERT – ASSOC. JUVENILE COUNSELOR I

##### JULY

LAWTON ERVING – JUVENILE COUNSELOR

##### AUGUST

RUBY MITCHELL – SERGEANT, SPECIAL OFFICER

##### SEPTEMBER

JOYA RAMIREZ – EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

##### OCTOBER

REUBEN REID – FOOD SERVICE

##### NOVEMBER

DIANE YORK – JUVENILE COUNSELOR

##### DECEMBER

ALEX PARKER – TOUR COMMANDER

#### Bridges Juvenile Center:

##### NOVEMBER

LEONARD STEWART – INSTITUTIONAL AIDE  
PEDRO CARLO – SENIOR COOK

##### DECEMBER

WAHED ULLAH – JUVENILE COUNSELOR

## 18<sup>th</sup> Annual QWL Ceremony Honors 54 from DJJ

By Stacy Jacob

The 2002 Quality of Work Life (QWL) Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony held on June 21<sup>st</sup> at District Council 37 was a tremendous success. Staff came out in large numbers to recognize and support their co-workers who received various awards.

The Longevity Awards honored 54 DJJ employees who have attained more than 10 years of City service. Joan Gittens and Alexander McRae received the Longevity Awards for their 30 years of service and Carl Emanuel and Stephanie Prussack were recognized for 25 years of service. In addition, 21 DJJ employees received awards for 20 years of service, 18 were recognized for 15 years of service, and 11 employees for 10 years of service with the City of New York.



2002 QWL poetry award recipients Rodney Dunson, Jenay Newsome and Rosia Smith

The ceremony also featured awards for the Department's Poetry Contest, sponsored by the QWL Committee. Rosia Smith was the recipient of the first place award for her poem, "Why My Son?" Second and third place awards were presented to Jenay



DJJ's 2002 basketball championship trophy is awarded to Horizon Juvenile Center.

Newsome and Rodney Dunson, respectively.

The QWL Committee also sponsored an intra-facility basketball tournament that sparked vigorous competition between detention facilities. In the end, the Horizon Juvenile Center Team beat-out all competitors and the trophy was graciously received at the June 21<sup>st</sup> event by Captain Jonathan Davis on behalf of his teammates.

A highlight of the 2002 Employee Recognition Ceremony was the swearing-in of Commissioner Neil Hernandez. Antoinette Staffa, who received her 30-year Longevity Award in 2001, along with Mr. Emanuel, administered the oath of office to Commissioner Hernandez who had previously served as Executive Director at both Bridges and Horizon before his appointment on January 1, 2002.

Both Commissioner Hernandez and Local 1457 President Alex Parker served as keynote speakers, and commended the hard work of the QWL Committee in coordinating the ceremony. Labor co-chair Maudria Caldwell-Hudson and Management co-chair Stacy Jacob emceed the program.

## DJJ Sponsors Employee Appreciation Picnic for Staff Members and Their Families

DJJ hosted its Annual Employee Picnic for staff and family at Van Cortlandt Park in the Bronx on September 21, 2002. The 2001 picnic had been cancelled in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The picnic was held at no cost to staff and provided employees an opportunity to gather with friends and family without the demands and deadlines associated with the daily work routine.

Despite the relaxed atmosphere, a healthy sense of competition prevailed as all who attended enjoyed watching Deputy Commissioner Monge fearlessly lead the volleyball team into battle. In the end, Bridges won the Volleyball Championship and Court Services/Transportation won the Softball Championship.

The event, which was attended by over 150 employees and family members, extended well beyond the scheduled cut-off time of 5:00pm. The assistance of the

Department of Parks and Recreation added to the success of this event.



*Commissioner Hernandez with DJJ staff and family enjoying the 2002 annual picnic.*

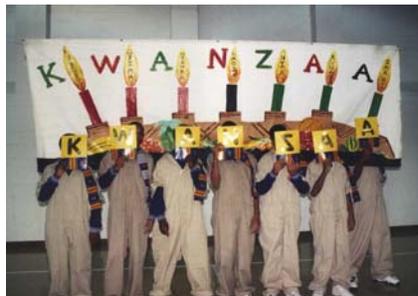
## **Horizon Holiday Celebrations Span Spectrum of Creativity and Culture**

*By Patricia Williams*

The 2002 winter holiday festivities at Horizon Juvenile Center began with an observance of Hanukah, followed by a traditional lighting of a Menorah. On December 6<sup>th</sup>, the facility lit its holiday tree in the central courtyard. After a moving holiday service provided by our Chaplain, Rev. Miguel Diaz, and with the first snow fall of the year providing additional decoration for our tree and our grazing reindeer, our youngest resident braved the winter weather to enter the courtyard and light our holiday display. All the residents watched from the warm comfort of our hallways overlooking the courtyard. To the delight of everyone, Executive Director Robert Boccio, with Earl Knight, delivered hot chocolate and cookies to each dormitory.

With 61 participants, "Kringlee Week" officially began on Decem-

ber 12<sup>th</sup>. For each of the ensuing seven days, each participant was required to perform a kind deed or gesture toward their "Kringlee." Speculation and random guesses were abundant as participants labored to identify who their "Kringler" was, while trying to hide their identity from their own "Kringlee." The week long event culminated in the opening of small gifts participants received from their respective Kringlers.



*DJJ youth celebrate Kwanzaa*

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, a holiday play produced by Mr. Turner of Passages Academy was performed by residents with the assistance of Recreation Director Willie Davis. This served as the kick-off of winter recess and the start of Horizon's "Winter Break Tournaments." For twelve days the residents competed in table tennis, eight ball billiards, video games, double dutch and chess. After much healthy competition, the champions enjoyed a pizza party on January 2, 2003.

A Christmas service was provided by the Seventh Day Adventists on December 22<sup>nd</sup> and a Mass was provided by the Sisters of Charity and the Franciscan Friars on December 25<sup>th</sup>. On December 26<sup>th</sup>, a celebration of Kwanzaa was observed. There was a presentation of the Seven Principles of

Kwanzaa, poetry, and African dancing by Eleanor Moody (Food Service Manager), Elizabeth Lindau (JC - Admissions Property), and Patricia Williams (Deputy Director of Operations). Ms. Lindau's children also participated in the dancing festivities.

Richard Green, Director and Founder of the Crown Heights Youth Collective, visited Horizon on December 30<sup>th</sup> to share his knowledge of Kwanzaa with residents who were enthralled during the two-hour presentation. Mr. Green brought cookies and books for all of our residents which he personally presented to each child and staff member as required by the Kwanzaa tradition.

## **Crossroads Celebrates a Birthday, Becomes Part of City Archives, and Remembers Beloved Employees**

The past 12 months have been a very busy time for the Crossroads Juvenile Center. Three events and observances in particular warrant mention. The first took place on August 1<sup>st</sup> when Crossroads marked its fourth anniversary. Residents created an introspective mural highlighting activities and accomplishments in commemoration of Crossroads completing its fourth year as a member of the DJJ family. The mural was displayed in the faculty atrium as a welcome to visitors and members of the Crossroads family as they entered the facility.



One of two artworks photographed and included in the City Archives.

The City Arts Commission visited Crossroads on August 6<sup>th</sup> to photograph works of art by Carlton Ingleton and Willie Birch to place in the City's archives. Ingleton's 'The Spirit of Love,' commissioned in 1997 by the Percent for Art Program of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Design and Construction, is a large, multi-media work currently on display within the facility, greeting residents, staff and visitors upon entry. The Arts Commission also photographed artist Willie Birch's 1997 mural titled 'If you don't know where you come from, how do you know where you are going?' The mural is painted on the hard surface in the facility's main courtyard. Both works have been on continuous display at the facility since it opened in 1998.

Summer 2002 ended on a somber note as the facility mourned the

loss of three members of its staff. Officer Thomas Mendoza who passed away in July, Recreation Director John Williams who died in August and Sergeant James Fleming who succumbed in September were all remembered at the Olympics Day 2002 event on October 14<sup>th</sup>, which was dedicated in their memory.

Executive Director Donna Locke said, "While we had a successful year, we feel the loss of three members of our Crossroads family. Their warm personalities and the tremendous contributions they made to DJJ will not be forgotten."

### **Motivational Speaker Lance "Claysmile" Smith Appears at S.E.E.D.S. Ceremony**



Lance "Claysmile" Smith brings a message of self-empowerment to youth at S.E.E.D.S.

Motivational speaker Lance "Claysmile" Smith was the keynote speaker at the end of summer ceremony for the S.E.E.D.S. institute on August 28th. Smith, who by his own admission started as an unfocused, depressed, special education student and transformed himself into a high-achieving, entrepreneurial college student, brought a message of hope and empowerment to the audience of more than 60 juveniles from DJJ's non-secure detention.

"Claysmile," as he is known to many, presented an upbeat and entertaining, interactive performance that detailed his own struggles and how he identified the strengths within himself that enabled him to change his life. Through a fun, gameshow-type format that included songs, role-playing and a question and answer session, Claysmile identified eight principles that DJJ's Non-Secure Detention students can draw on to inspire changes in their own lives.

The 22-year-old author, rapper, motivational speaker and accounting major was very well received and proved to be the perfect closing act to the S.E.E.D.S. program's premiere season.

### **DJJ Joins Mayor's Anti-Graffiti Effort to Improve Quality of Life in Brooklyn**

On September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, clients and staff of the Community Based Intervention program participated in Mayor Bloomberg's Anti-Graffiti initiative. More than fifteen juveniles between the ages of 13 and 16 cleaned and painted over graffiti on store gates in the New Utrecht section of Brooklyn. This two-day event was a joint venture between the Mayor's Office and DJJ. More than 40 storefronts were cleaned and painted with supplies provided by The Home Depot.

The residents of the community embraced our youth and staff for the services they provided. Local precincts were also actively involved in the agency's effort. Commissioner Hernandez visited the site wearing painting clothes



*CBI youth assist Mayor Bloomberg's anti-graffiti initiative, painting storefronts along New Utrecht Avenue in Brooklyn.*

and assisted the youth in painting storefront gates.

The Mayor's 2002 Anti-Graffiti Task Force was a multi-agency effort that included assistance from local community groups. Co-ordinated by CAU, the Task Force attacked graffiti throughout the five boroughs, focusing on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx; Borough Park, Bay Ridge, Williamsburg, Greenpoint, and Bushwick in Brooklyn; Inwood, Turtle Bay, and Harlem in Manhattan; Astoria, Sunnyside, and Woodside in Queens; and New Dorp, Port Richmond, and West Brighton in Staten Island.

More than 1,500 gallons of paint plus brushes, roller sleeves, poles, paint trays and drop cloths were donated by The Home Depot.



*Officials from the NYC Department of Business Services, the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Pitkin Avenue BID Cut Ribbon in Brownsville.*

## **Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Business Services and Pitkin Avenue Business Improvement District Cut Ribbon Officially Opening Parking Lot in Brownsville**

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2002, DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the official opening of the parking lot located across the street from the Crossroads Juvenile Center in Brooklyn. The DJJ Commissioner was joined by Department of Business Services Commissioner Robert Walsh and Pitkin Avenue BID Executive Director Anthony Santiago.

The grand opening was the culmination of years of planning that began in 1989 when the City approved construction of the Crossroads facility.

In an effort to ease community concern over the siting of a juvenile detention center within Brownsville, the City committed to constructing a parking lot for com-

munity use at an adjacent lot owned by the Police Department. Delays that hampered the project due to concern the allotted \$800,000 would be insufficient to finish the lot were remedied when DJJ established a partnership with the Department of Design and Construction to ensure timely completion last year.

Following construction, jurisdiction over the parking lot was transferred to the Department of Business Services. DBS, in turn, contracted with the Pitkin Avenue Business Improvement District to operate the lot and provide business and employment opportunities for the community. The parking lot will also provide much needed parking relief to the surrounding community.



*Commissioner Hernandez meets with Steven Birch during 'Take Your Children to Work' Day 2002.*

## **Accolades**

### ***The Latest News About DJJ Employees***



#### **Pamela Byrd Receives City Technology Award**

On Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) hosted its annual NYC Excellence in Technology Awards. DJJ's Pamela Byrd was honored at the ceremony with an Excellence in IT Support and Service Award. Ms. Byrd has been instrumental in advancing the databases utilized by DJJ staff for inventory and property management, purchasing systems, and juvenile and staff facility incident reporting. This last database has played a critical role in facilitating our GOALS performance measurement system, which has vastly increased the agency's overall effectiveness and efficiency.

MIS Director Melvin Hyatte said, "This is a well deserved honor for Pamela Byrd. MIS is very proud."

#### **Diane Firstman Makes Professional Comedy Debut at Comic Strip Live**

DJJ's Director of Planning made her professional debut at the comedy world's acclaimed Comic

Strip Live on Manhattan's Upper East Side in May. Cheered on by a throng of enthusiastic friends and colleagues, Diane towered over the competition giving a bold, hilarious, well-timed performance.

The quick-witted maven of numbers threw her sense of humor at the mercy of her colleagues and was not disappointed as they laughed, applauded and cried for more during her professional debut.

Firstman, who received comedy training at both the New School and New York University, credits everyday life as her source of inspiration for comedy material. 'Invisible babies', one of Diane's funniest routines, was drawn from witnessing a woman on the street who was pushing an empty baby stroller.

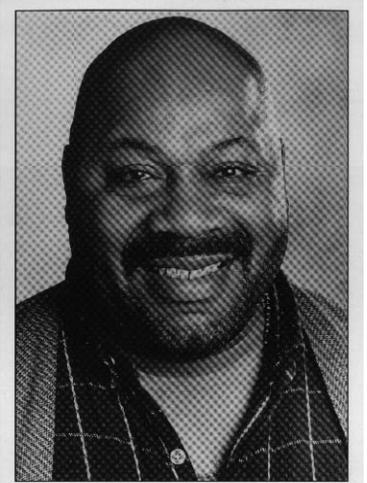
Firstman carries a notepad wherever she goes to jot down thoughts about a new bit whenever the inspiration strikes. She readily admits earning a full-time living from comedy is difficult, so, for now anyway, her comedy routines will remain a hobby.

#### **James Williams Guest Stars on Law & Order: Criminal Intent**

DJJ's own James Williams is well on his way to earning a spot on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In May, Williams appeared as a guest star in an episode of NBC's critically

acclaimed prime time, crime drama Law & Order: Criminal Intent.

Williams, who is most recognized for his role as DJJ's chief trainer at SETA, adopted the persona of "Morris," a school safety officer in an episode of the high-impact Sunday night show.



**James E. Williams**

While he had his own trailer complete with his name on the door, Williams put in long hours filming the scene which involved several takes between the hours of 7:00pm and 12:00 midnight.

His agent secured the audition, but it was James' own raw talent that earned him a coveted spot on the hit NBC show. As a result of his appearance, James qualified for a Screen Actors Guild (SAG) card, the ultimate credential for opening top acting doors down the road.

Williams is currently taking two classes, including Advanced Commercial techniques for TV and an improv workshop. Those who know him know he has the talent to succeed in the rough and tumble world of entertainment.

Watch out, Denzel!

## **Partings**

### ***Familiar Faces Leave DJJ***

#### **Legends Leave a Legacy at Department of Juvenile Justice**

After many years of tireless and dedicated service, several of DJJ's most familiar faces made their official exit in 2002. All in all, 27 tenured employees retired from City service, many taking advantage of the early retirement package made available in October 2002.

Commissioner Hernandez praised the work of the retiring staff members, saying "The Department of Juvenile Justice owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to all of our employees who have worked so hard to build DJJ since its inception in 1979."

Among those who have moved on to greener pastures are Kay Murray, DJJ's General Counsel from the early days of the operation, Spencer Stanford, the agency's Executive Director of Court Services, Antoinette Staffa who officially swore Commissioner Hernandez in at the 18<sup>th</sup> annual QWL ceremony, and Marion Brown who so faithfully ensured MCCU's round-the-clock operation with surgical precision.

Marion Brown, who worked at the agency for 27 years, readily admitted, "I worked for DJJ a long time and I loved it there. Retirement will be very different from going into the office every day, but I will keep in touch with my friends at the Department."



*Spencer Stanford with Michelle Pinnock-Clerk*



*Deputy Commissioner Crystal Monge, Marion Brown and Susan Campos*



*NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez, Leslie Hurdle, OATH Administrative Law Judge Roberto Velez and Commissioner Neil Hernandez say farewell to Kay Murray.*



*DJJ Commissioner Neil Hernandez with newly-retired Antoinette Staffa*

#### **The complete list of retiring DJJ employees:**

James Baker  
Louis Bell  
Marion Brown  
Ernest Browne  
Joycie Bushell  
Quincella Cobb  
Marshall Jones  
Victor Maldonado  
Hilda Mcphee  
Cornelius Millington  
Rochelle Modeste-Joseph  
Kay Murray  
Essie Perry  
Elsie Ponder

Jane Prescod  
Clydie Rice  
Gladstone Roberts  
Kathryn Rollerson  
Jose Ruiz  
Lena Simmons  
Antoinette Staffa  
Spencer Stanford  
Jacqueline Thomas  
Scott Tolliver  
Ethel Washington  
Fred Whittington  
Caretha Wiley

**EEO SERVICES  
AVAILABLE TO ALL  
DJJ EMPLOYEES**

The Equal Employment Opportunity Unit (EEO) is here to assist you with your EEO concerns. If you are experiencing any type of job issue and you are not sure whether it is EEO-related, you can reach out to any of the EEO Counselors stationed at each one of DJJ's facilities.

Counselors can provide you with information to determine if your concerns are EEO-related or not. Please feel free to utilize their services. They will be more than happy to assist you.

EEO Director Tonia Haynes encourages DJJ employees with questions about EEO issues to contact her in confidence at 212-925-7779 ext. 229. In addition, DJJ employees interested in serving as EEO Counselors are welcome to apply.

Discrimination in employment practices can take many forms and is strictly prohibited by law. If you feel you have been discriminated against based upon any of the following categories, speak with your EEO Counselor.

**Categories of discrimination:**

- Age
- Citizenship/Alienage Status
- Color
- Disability
- Gender/Sex
- Marital Status
- Military Status
- National Origin/Ethnicity
- Prior Arrest Record or Conviction

- Race
- Religion
- Retaliation
- Sexual Orientation
- Victims of Domestic Violence

**Current EEO Counselors:**

**SECURE DETENTION**

***Bridges Juvenile Center:***

Reginald Gibson  
718-764-2700

Kehinde Oladele  
718-764-2700

Taiwo Oladele  
718-764-2700

***Crossroads Juvenile Center:***

Nelson Nieves  
718-495-8160

***Horizon Juvenile Center:***

Dusha Holmes  
718-292-0065 ext. 605

**NON-SECURE DETENTION**

***Beach NSD:***

Sharlene Minus  
718-597-3842

**CENTRAL OFFICE**

Dorothy Gamble  
212-925-7779 ext. 221

Beverly McInnis  
212-925-7779 ext. 308

**QWL  
BASKETBALL  
TOURNAMENT**

**2002 Schedule**

**THE QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL) COMMITTEE INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THE 2003 QWL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT GAMES. THE 2003 SCHEDULE IS AS FOLLOWS:**

**FEBRUARY 6**

BRIDGES AT HORIZON  
NSD AT CROSSROADS

**FEBRUARY 20**

HORIZON AT CROSSROADS  
NSD V. BRIDGES AT HORIZON

**MARCH 6**

BRIDGES AT CROSSROADS  
NSD AT HORIZON

**MARCH 20**

BRIDGES AT HORIZON  
NSD AT CROSSROADS

**APRIL 3**

NSD V. BRIDGES AT HORIZON

**APRIL 10**

PLAY-OFF BEGINS

**MAY 1**

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

*(All games are scheduled to start at 7:30 p.m.)*

**SCHEDULE IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.**