

Juvenile Justice Report

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

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor

Winter 2005

Neil Hernandez, Commissioner



Associate Juvenile Counselor Mozell Stafford receives award for 'Outstanding Performance for Most Efficient Detention Room' from Court Services Executive Director Susan Campos.

DJJ Holds Employee Recognition Ceremony at Tweed Courthouse

Hundreds attend as staff is recognized for outstanding performance; awards given for professional excellence

On Thursday, November 18th, the NYC Department of Juvenile Justice held its first Employee Recognition Ceremony, commemorating the outstanding commitment and achievements of 18 exceptional agency staff members.

The event was held in the Blue Room at the historic Tweed Courthouse, which serves as headquarters for the City's Department of Education.

More than 200 people gathered to recognize the outstanding accomplishments and extraordinary dedication of employees who distinguished themselves in 2004 through exceptional service to the City of New York.

Each recipient was presented with a custom-engraved crystal award listing his or her name, title and award category. Awards were distributed by a number of notable presenters that included DEA Supervisory Special Agent Mauricio Fernandez, Teamsters Citywide Director Gregory Floyd, Zac Smith - Deputy Chief of Staff to Deputy Mayor Walcott, and Fred Gebauer, Counsel to Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt.

NYC Council Member and Chair of the Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice Sara M. Gonzalez congratulated the award recipients and provided special remarks during the ceremony.

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Mayor's Message

By Michael R. Bloomberg

Three years ago, I was inaugurated as the 108th Mayor of this great city. It was only months after the attack on the World Trade Center and New Yorkers throughout the City were asking ourselves: Can we recover? Will we be safe? Would we ever be the same?



Three years later, we have answered these questions. We are safer today than we have been in modern memory. We have taken our City from financial crisis to financial stability. We are creating new jobs and we are making our school system the best in the nation.

The state of the City is strong – and we are going to make it even stronger for the future. We will do that by build-

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Agency Hosts Columbia U. Peacebuilders from Ireland

In October, DJJ participated in the Northern Ireland Peacebuilders Program, an international training and research project sponsored by Columbia University.



Peacebuilding at Juvenile Justice

The program was designed to promote professional relationships and exchange between U.S. governmental and public service entities and their counterparts in Northern Ireland.

The ultimate goal is to provide understanding and useful insight into

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Peacebuilders –

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effective strategies and operations that may be used in Ireland to build peace in what has been a troubled land.

Police officials and community leaders from Northern Ireland were selected through a highly competitive process to engage in four weeks of study and work in the United States. Participants were grouped into two-person teams, spending weeks one and four attending classes at Columbia University and weeks two and three in assignments with governmental and other organizations in New York City.

Peter Connolly, Crime Prevention Officer with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, and Roisin Muldoon, Operations Manager with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, were assigned to DJJ.



Peacebuilders Peter Connolly and Roisin Muldoon visit Crossroads with Donna Locke

During their tenure with the agency, the team met with the Commissioner and management staff, observed operations and court proceedings, and shadowed medical and mental health and case management staff in DJJ's secure and non-secure facilities.

In addition to DJJ, organizations hosting the Peacebuilders included NYPD and the Department of Parks & Recreation.

Mayor's Message –

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-ing on our successes and building a "City of opportunity." Together, we will foster opportunity by making the safest American city even safer.

Our public safety agencies have played an important role in the achievements our City has experienced over the past three years. Through programs such as Operation Impact, anti-gun initiatives, Operation Spotlight and others, crime is down 14%, to the lowest levels since the 1960s. Gang activity has been reduced, there is less graffiti, and quality of life has been enhanced in all five boroughs.

I am proud of our public safety achievements and this includes the important work of all the dedicated staff at the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Some look to the future with doubt and uncertainty. New Yorkers look

to the future with spirit and confidence and see a City of opportunity.

I want to thank you for your hard work and express my appreciation for your efforts in maintaining and enhancing public safety in New York.

New Faces at DJJ Department of Juvenile Justice adds 41 new staff members

In November, NYC Department of Correction veteran Thomas Tsotsoros joined DJJ as Deputy Commissioner for Operations and Detention. In addition, Walter R. Ellis was hired as the agency's Deputy Director of Human Resources and Stanley N. Helfeld as Director of Training.

To further support agency operations, 41 new staff members were added across the board, including 31 Juvenile Counselors, 4 Special Officers, 2 Case Managers, 3 Institutional Aides, and one Homemaker in SEEDS.

In addition to new employees, several staff members were recently promoted. Among them are Cynthia Mickens and Gustavo Diaz, both from Horizon, and Joseph Forrester from Crossroads. All three were promoted to the rank of Senior Special Officer.



Patsy Saleh receives shield from Deputy Commissioner Tsotsoros and Assistant Commissioner Pu-Folkes during graduation ceremony at Bridges



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Published by the
New York City
Department of Juvenile Justice

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Joyce Dao Receives NYC Excellence in Technology Award

On Thursday, October 21st, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) hosted its annual NYC Excellence in Technology Awards. DJJ's Joyce Dao was honored at the ceremony with an Excellence in IT Service and Support Award.



Excellence in Technology Award winner Joyce Dao is congratulated by her father, Chau Dao, and IT Director Melvin Hyatte

Ms. Dao has been instrumental in activating the Department's website and making certain that its features and content remain functional and up to date. In addition, she provides technical support for the agency's network administration as well as for DJJ's Central Office and Court Services.

The annual citywide Excellence in Technology Awards Program was established to salute the City's IT professionals and managers for their dedication and continuing service to the people of New York. Agency heads throughout the City were invited to submit nominations. A screening panel reviewed each submission and selected a winner in each category.

The number of nominations received for 2004 vastly exceeded those submitted in prior years, resulting, as always, in a highly qualified pool of candidates for the coveted awards.

DJJ IT Director Melvin Hyatte said, "Joyce is a shining star in DJJ's IT Department who performs her duties with exceptional skill and talent. DJJ is very fortunate to have her on its agency team."

Several of Ms. Dao's colleagues as well as her father, Chau M. Dao, turned out to show support for Joyce as she was recognized for the special honor.

Landslide Victory in DJJ Election Day Youth Programs

On Tuesday, November 2nd, 93 juveniles at Bridges and nearly 100 residents from SEEDS participated in separate Youth Election Day programs, designed to familiarize them with the voting process and permit them to cast their ballot in a mock election for President and Vice President of the United States, and Senator from the State of New York.

Juveniles were selected to portray Republican and Democratic Party candidates for each of the three offices. Each "candidate" studied the actual candidate's positions on key issues before participating in a presentation for their peers and DJJ staff members.

The all-day program included voter registration and role playing performances focused on the history of

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Residents stage mock debates and hold campaign skits during Election Day programs at SEEDS and Bridges Juvenile Center

Commissioner's Message

By Neil Hernandez



The beginning of the new year is a special time, because we each make resolutions and plan what we want to accomplish over the next 12 months. Mayor Bloomberg recently did this during his State of the City Address.

I listened with Executive Directors Migdalia Cortes and Dennis Anyata as Mayor Bloomberg shared a vision for our 'City of Opportunity.' Under his plan, we will see more crime reduction that preserves our safety, more educational reform that ensures our kids are the best and brightest, and more economic development that invigorates housing and business across all five boroughs.

To support this vision, the Mayor presented a \$48.3 billion budget that will put the City on firmer financial footing, while closing a \$3 billion budget gap. This will guard against tax increases and give homeowners another tax rebate.

Under the Mayor's plan, DJJ will receive more than 200 additional staff to advance the important work that we do. This is in addition to the 41 new staff members who just joined us.

DJJ is also undertaking new initiatives. Through the efforts of Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Chair Sara Gonzalez, four community-based organizations have begun working with youth in detention on issues such as drug prevention, gang violence awareness, anger management, and life skills. They're also working with our discharge planners to help youth who need services after leaving detention.

We're continuing to roll-out ASPIRE, our new behavior management program, in an effort to make these and all our services more beneficial while protecting staff and resident safety.

We're always looking to do more, and I look forward to continuing to work with you and our new staff members to make this year our very best yet.

Residents Explore College and Career Possibilities at Passages Academy

Through a strategic partnership with the New York City College of Technology, Passages Academy is making career education and exploration available to juvenile residents.

The innovative program has provided for several departments from the college to visit select Passages sites to gauge response to and interest in the program. Professors from the college have made presentations to residents, covering fields such as hospitality, travel and tourism, dental hygiene, advertising design, and graphic arts.

Initial presentations were well received and plans are underway to expand the program into subsequent semesters.

Passages Academy is a New York City public school that provides credit-bearing classes, educational services and quality programs to young people who are in the care and custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Offering courses for grades 5 through 12, Passages classes follow New York City curriculum



Council Member Sara Gonzalez, Chair of the Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice, speaks at DJJ's Employee Recognition Ceremony

and New York State Standards. More than 4,000 school age students are enrolled through Passages Academy each year.

Election Day –

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ballot casting and voting rights in the U.S. Skits were followed by a briefing on the duties and responsibilities of the President, Vice President, and U.S. Senators, as well as a simulated debate between student candidates.

Votes cast by the juveniles produced interesting results. SEEDS voters selected John Kerry and Charles Schumer by wide margins. Juvenile voters at Bridges also chose John Kerry over George W. Bush by a margin of 77 votes.

The Election Day Program was planned and implemented by Migdalia Cortes at SEEDS and Dennis Anyata at Bridges.

Award ceremony –

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DJJ employees, colleagues, family members and friends, as well as individuals from other agencies, turned out to support the award recipients. Each of the honorees took the time to make brief remarks upon accepting their award.

The award presentation ceremony was followed by a reception in the building's ornate rotunda area. DJJ is the first agency to hold such a ceremony in the historic venue.

For more information about DJJ or to access back issues of the Juvenile Justice report, visit us online at:

nyc.gov/html/djj

Recognition Award Photo Gallery



Passages Academy Principal Sydney Blair receives award from Zac Smith



Assistant Commissioner Bavaro presents award to Michael Joseph



DEA Supervisory Special Agent Mauricio Fernandez with Jabel Soliz



Marizol Sanchez with Teamsters Citywide Director Gregory Floyd