BOBBY JINDAL, Governor

Office of Juvenile Justice

MARY L. LIVERS, Ph.D., MSW, Deputy Secretary

April 9, 2014

Open Letter to All OJJ Employees

Dear OJJ Colleagues:

This is my annual letter to you, outlining our agency's accomplishments during the year gone by. It's a little tardy this year – we did have a major initiative going on in the early months of 2014 that distracted us for a minute.

In 2013, we continued to provide, and be recognized for providing, quality services to the youth and families in our care and custody, despite decreasing resources. OJJ staff continue to step up and meet the mission. Meeting the mission would not be possible without staff commitment to delivering treatment in a professional, caring manner. In the decade since reforms were mandated in Louisiana's juvenile justice system, and our agency was formed from that mandate, we have matured into a cohesive unit that moves forward with one mission. We are seeing better outcomes and we have proven that we can meet the goals that were set for us in creating a better continuum of care. We are not "there" yet – no agency will ever be "there" – but we continue to strive to be the best we can be.

Following are some of the accomplishments and milestones of 2013.

Education – Preparing Youth for Successful Futures

Graduating to the next level
In 2013, 68 secure care youth earned GEDs. Swanson had 43 graduates, Bridge City had 9 graduates and Jetson had 16 graduates. Each facility hosted a graduation ceremony in recognition of our students' hard work. Parents and other relatives were invited to attend, and a reception followed for graduates and guests.

OJJ received four grants to assist with educational improvements, from

- the Dollar General Literacy Foundation
- the Junior League of Baton Rouge
- LCLE
- 2nd Chance technology

Dollar General Literacy Foundation Grant supports BCCY's Riverside High School's literacy programs
We received a $2,000 Youth Literacy grant to purchase and implement Renaissance Learning's Accelerated Reader Enterprise and STAR Reading Enterprise software packages for Riverside

Alternative High School at Bridge City. This system allows teachers to assess reading skills and increase the grade-equivalent levels of at-risk youth. Students read materials on an appropriate reading level in class; take short comprehension quizzes, then the Renaissance software provides scores and immediate feedback to enable guided independent reading and set personalized goals for each student.

Vocational programs implemented in our secure facilities:

- Automotive Repair
- Horticulture
- Culinary Arts
- Small Engine Repair
- Carpentry
    - Swanson's Southside Alternative School's carpentry class continues its partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Monroe. To date, our students have helped to build approximately 20 houses.
- Welding
- C-Tech
    - We established a partnership with the Hope Center of New Orleans to help provide continuing education and job placement services for C-Tech vocational program students at Bridge City
    - Technology upgrades in each C-Tech lab (7 computers, 1 interactive teaching board)

Vocational education certifications earned:

- **ServSafe:** 16
- **OSHA:** 10
- **C-Tech:** 10

Milestones

- OJJ schools were re-approved as alternative schools under new guidelines established by BESE. Initial approval was granted by BESE in 1986.
- The instructional day includes 6 hours of instruction and exceeds the required instructional time required by the Department of Education.
- All OJJ teachers hold valid Louisiana teaching certificates.
    - 61% of our teachers were rated Effective Proficient;
    - 38% of our teachers rated Highly Effective on the Dept. of Education Compass Teacher Evaluation.
- Pupil-teacher ratio does not exceed 14:1 in academic classes; vocational classes do not exceed 8 students per class period.
- Special education services are provided in an inclusion model at all facility schools.
- All OJJ schools have been established as ACT testing sites; 57 youth were tested, 1 youth scored a 27!
- TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education): 75% of students tested increased their TABE scores in at least one subject.
- Computer labs were established at each school, with computers and servers.
- Interactive teaching boards were installed in every core subject classroom.
- Career Scope and Occubrowser Career Planning software were installed at each school. This career interest profiler helps youth explore jobs based on interest and ability.

- The READ 180 program was implemented at Riverside School at Bridge City to assist struggling readers.
- NEO 2 mobile e-learning devices were purchased for each school. These hand-held electronic devices are used to build skills in keyboarding, writing, reading and math.

American Correctional Association (ACA)

OJJ Received the Golden Eagle Award for 100 Percent Accreditation

OJJ captured a rare bird when we received the ACA Golden Eagle Award for commitment to excellence by achieving ACA accreditation in all of our units. All secure care facilities, all 11 regional field services offices and central office are ACA accredited.

OJJ is only the third juvenile justice system in the nation to win the ACA Golden Eagle Award, joining Kentucky and Ohio. The award was presented at the ACA annual summer conference in Washington, DC. ACA Accreditation Manager Angela Arabie, was present to accept the award with me.

Staff throughout the entire agency worked tirelessly to achieve full accreditation. I am very proud to have received this important recognition from ACA, but the credit goes to staff in every location, who worked together in their respective units and supported one another as needed. This award reflects your dedication to the highest standards of excellence and commitment to our mission.

Accreditation is valid for three years. Field Services/P&P has been accredited since 1994 and was most recently re-accredited in 2011, with 100 percent compliance on 202 mandatory and non-mandatory standards. For secure care facilities, 38 mandatory and 329 non-mandatory standards cover all aspects of each facility. Swanson-Monroe and Jetson were accredited in 2011. Jetson was 100 percent compliant on all 367 standards. Swanson was 100 percent compliant on 38 mandatory standards and 97.45 percent compliant on 329 non-mandatory standards. Bridge City was accredited in 2012, with 100 percent compliance on 38 mandatory standards and 99.3 percent compliance with 331 non-mandatory standards. Central office was accredited in 2009 and re-accredited in 2012, with 100 percent compliance on two mandatory and 138 non-mandatory standards.

Staff Presented at the ACA Summer Conference

A panel discussion on Service Coordination was presented by OJJ staff at the summer conference. Speakers were Chief of Operations Ellyn Toney, Regional Director Carolyn Lewis and Regional Director Susan Miller. Assistant Secretary Sean Hamilton moderated the session, entitled *Service Coordination –Louisiana's "Bright Idea."* The panel opened with information about our Service Coordination model receiving a "*Bright Idea"* award from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government's *Innovations in American Government* Awards Program. The discussion then turned to a brief history of OJJ, and the core values and goals of Service Coordination, followed by an overview of the model. The panelists walked through the rollout process within the agency and lessons learned, and concluded with data concerning outcomes of the program.

Two Staff publish Articles in Corrections Today

OJJ staff published two articles in ACA's ***Corrections Today*** magazine in Fall 2013. Director of Health Services Kelly Smith and Dr. Yolanda Crump, Sex Offender Treatment Coordinator, were published in the November/December 2013 Correctional Health Care Issue.

Maintaining Health Insurance for Incarcerated Youths, by Kelly D. Smith, MN, APRN, PHCNS
The article sheds light on the capacity and challenges faced by juvenile justice systems in covering health care costs for juveniles in their custody. Many youth come from low socio-economic backgrounds which qualifies them for the federal Medicaid program. Once incarcerated, they are ineligible for Medicaid, or if previously enrolled, the benefits are terminated or suspended. In Louisiana, the benefits are suspended. However, the state is obligated to continue providing medical and mental health services.

Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice's Comprehensive Statewide Approach to Treating Juvenile Sex Offenders, by Dr. Yolanda Crump, Sex Offender Treatment Coordinator
The article provides a detailed summary of OJJ's programs designed to treat juvenile sex offenders. OJJ has developed a statewide continuum of community-based and secure-care treatment services for youth who have committed sex offenses. Within the continuum a three-pronged approach to treatment includes youth in secure care, community-based residential facilities and outpatient treatment clinics. The secure care treatment program addresses the needs of juveniles who are at a higher risk to reoffend, while the community-based programs address the needs of juveniles who are identified as low to moderate risk. The statewide specialized treatment program is based on current research and represents a best-practice model of treatment specifically designed to meet the needs of juvenile sex offenders. Louisiana has implemented a comprehensive assessment and treatment program that relies on the collaboration of various disciplines whose goals are to produce individuals who are law-abiding citizens and maintain public safety.

OJJ Opens Swanson Center for Youth at Columbia

The Columbia area welcomed a new friend in a familiar setting, as we opened Swanson Center for Youth at Columbia (SCYC), as a satellite facility Swanson-Monroe, on the site of a former DHH facility.

DHH/Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities' Columbia Community Residential and Employment Services (CCRES) originally housed residents with developmental disabilities.

In 2005, DHH closed the facility in compliance with the federal mandate that developmentally disabled individuals receive services in community-based residential settings rather than institutions. The property was transferred from DHH to OJJ in 2010 for use as a secure care center for youth.

Columbia is a small, regional facility, aligned with our systemic reform that provides youth with treatment and rehabilitation services. SCYC houses up to 48 youth and has 68 employees, who moved from Swanson-Monroe after renovations to the 10-acre campus were completed. SCYC's on-site school is Pinehill Alternative School.

OJJ Staff – Our Most Valuable Asset

Public Service Recognition Week and National Corrections Officers Week

On the eve of a week set aside to honor public servants, a resolution by the Louisiana Senate was passed that commended the agency and acknowledged our reform accomplishments. Sponsored by Senate President Pro Tempore Sharon Weston Broome, the resolution noted a significant number of achievements and national honors that we racked up during the previous year.

May 5–11 was Public Service Recognition Week, set aside by Congress to recognize the contributions of public employees and the services they provide, and to promote the spirit of public service. May 8 was State Employee Recognition Day in Louisiana. The first week in May was also National Corrections Officers Week, recognized by ACA and the National Institute of Corrections to honor the contributions and work of correctional officers and personnel.

We had recognition programs at each of the secure care facilities and central office to honor employees and recognize their contributions to the public. There is no greater career than public service, and no greater responsibility than working in a public agency. We serve to fulfill a mission that does not bring us an excess of earthly riches, but allows us to do good things that transcend material gain. Our agency serves a difficult population, often under very challenging circumstances.

APPA Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week

In July, we recognized the American Probation and Parole Association's (APPA) Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week in big way with programs in each field office, attended by elected officials, judges, district attorneys, law enforcement representatives, community partners and providers and other stakeholders, and central office staff. People came together to show appreciation for the contributions of our PPOs to public safety and the wellbeing of at-risk youth and their families. The annual observance recognizes the dedicated and caring officers who work to make communities safer by assisting juvenile offenders in becoming productive citizens, one child at a time. Local officials attended the program to learn about the services PPOs provide and their impact on public safety.

The Legislature also recognized our field staff. Senate Resolution 169 by Sen. Neil Riser, designated the week of July 21-27, 2013, as Pretrial, Probation, and Parole Supervision Week and commended OJJ field staff for their work with youth and families in the community.

Last year Louisiana was cited nationally for having one of the largest decreases in the number of youth placed in secure care facilities. We know that the dedication and effort of our PPOs working with youth in the community is a contributing factor to this success.

Integration of P&P in facilities

As we continue to work toward "One OJJ," PPOs and facility staff are working together on a regular basis to provide the best possible service to our youth. Since regionalization has been implemented, field and facility staff participate in regular, joint staff meetings and training opportunities. These meetings keep all staff current on issues and agency-wide information,

allowing field staff to learn firsthand about issues facility issues and facility staff to be aware of field services matters.

To reinforce the service coordination model, field and facility staff in the Southeastern region are participating in joint pre-service training. PPOs are going to Bridge City for combined training where applicable. Staff are able to get both the field and facility perspectives, and field staff are becoming more oriented with the facilities.

PPOs and facility staff are participating together in regular staffings, reclassifications, difficult case staffings, early release issues, transfers, special tasks and projects, outings, events and programs. Whenever there has been a need for outside assistance, such as supervision of youth for testing, medical services, or outings, the Facility Directors now contact the P&P offices for assistance.

PPOs are working with youth and staff on restorative justice programs and accompanying them on trips and activities for restorative justice projects, such as food drives, working in food banks, etc. Field and facility staff work together to arrange youth participation. Special programs such as Corrections Employee appreciation, graduations, and Celebrations of Change programs have become opportunities for field and facility staff to work together to plan and present events.

PREA

OJJ made many strides relating to PREA compliance over the past year. The PREA Steering Committee continues to meet quarterly to discuss the status of facility and agency compliance with each PREA standard and compliance progress of each contract facility. A staff member serves as a liaison with the contract facilities to help them achieve compliance.

In 2013, all OJJ staff received training about PREA, centered on a real-life case of staff sexual misconduct in another state. The training included video of an investigative interview with the perpetrator and involved in-depth discussion on ways to prevent this type of occurrence. This training topic and method of delivery received high reviews by staff as being extremely effective.

OJJ received a PREA grant from the Department of Justice in 2011 that continues through September 2014. The grant funds have been used to conduct in-depth sexual safety assessments for the secure facilities and six contract facilities. Two leadership summits facilitated by national PREA experts held in New Orleans brought together top level leaders from five southern states, Texas, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama and Louisiana. State leaders discussed issues relating to culture and PREA compliance, and the group is working to develop a cultural tool kit that will be given to the national PREA Resource Center as a resource for juvenile justice agencies throughout the nation.

Another grant initiative is our adoption of the *Diana Screen* as a screening tool for new hires. This tool is a child sexual abuse risk reduction screening test used to help select safer candidates to serve in positions involving supervision of/contact with children. A final grant initiative involves a process to capture secure care incident data on a daily basis, improving our ability to monitor activities.

OJJ received a second PREA grant that will last through 2015, to allow us to take PREA leadership training to mid-level managers in the secure facilities, and will fund another leadership summit to continue work on the Cultural Toolkit.

Measuring Success through Numbers

SAVRY - Supporting appropriate treatment

OJJ has stressed the importance of our youth receiving evidence based assessments and services and taken administrative steps to facilitate their use. In 2009, the SAVRY assessment tool was implemented at all points along the OJJ continuum, with reassessment every 6 months.

OJJ uses the SAVRY to assess the risk level of all youth in secure care custody. The results of the SAVRY give OJJ a clearer picture of the risk to public safety that secure care youth pose. In December 2013, 95% of the youth in secure care were assessed as having a moderate to high risk for future violence and 96% of the youth in secure care were assessed as having a moderate to high risk for future delinquency. These numbers support the fact that we are treating the right youth in our secure care environments.

The SAVRY protocol targets empirically-based risk and needs factors that, if appropriately treated, may reduce a youth's risk for offending in the future. Individualized plans for the rehabilitation services for each OJJ youth emerge from the SAVRY assessment results. The SAVRY allows us to serve youth in the least restrictive setting when deemed appropriate and supports our efforts to facilitate a smooth transition back into their home communities.

Court Modifications - Increase in furloughs, stepdowns, early releases.

As the therapeutic model continues to show success with treatment and rehabilitation of youth, we are working with judges and DAs to allow steps toward reintegration and early release for youth whose behavior merits these rewards. We have seen a steady increase in the number of youth receiving furloughs, steppng down to less restrictive settings and earning early releases. During 2013, 262 Court Modifications were requested and 90% of them were approved. As a result, 173 youth were released to probation or parole, 26 youth were stepped down to non-secure care and 38 youth were released from OJJ custody and supervision.

Recidivism rate continues to decline

The recidivism rate is one of the primary tools used to measure the success of our programs. Over the past few years, fewer youth have discharged from OJJ custody, paralleling the decline in the number of youth being adjudicated to our system. The two-year cohort group for the 2013 report is 2010-11, the year that saw the most dramatic decline. Percentages may be small, but are statistically significant as long as they are going in the right direction.

The overall success rate for discharged youth remaining out of OJJ or Department of Corrections (DOC) custody for one year increased from 85.7% in 2012, to 86.1% in 2013, resulting in a .4% improvement. The two year success rate for discharged youth remaining out of OJJ/DOC care decreased slightly – moving from 76.5% in 2012 to 75.7% remaining out of custody in 2013, resulting from a 13% decrease in the number of recidivists. The overall success rate for

discharged youth remaining out of custody for three years increased 2.6%, from 67.3% in 2012 to 69.9% in 2013.

Secure Care: The one-year success rate of secure care youth remaining out of OJJ/DOC custody improved from 78.2% in 2012 to 80.8% in 2013. The three-year success rate also increased by 2.6%, from 55.5% of youth remaining out of custody in 2012, to 58.1% in 2013. This marks the second consecutive year in which the three-year secure rate experienced an increase in success.

Non-Secure: The non-secure one-year success rate improved by .1%, increasing from 79.6% in 2012 to 79.7% in 2013. The three-year success rate for non-secure youth increased significantly, moving from 57.8% in 2012, to 62.7% remaining out of custody in 2013 – an increase of 4.9%.

Probation/Parole Supervision: The one-year success rate of youth under supervision showed a minimal decrease of .2%, moving from 88.8% remaining out of custody in 2012, to 88.6% remaining out of custody in 2013. The actual number of recidivists during this timeframe, however, decreased from 223 to 215. The two-year success rate of supervision youth increased by .9%, moving from 79.9% of youth remaining out of custody in 2012, to 80.8% in 2013. The success rate for youth three years out of supervision increased notably from 72.5% in 2012, to 74.3% of youth remaining out of custody in 2013 – an improvement of 1.8%.

Community Outreach

Community Liaison Councils

Per policy, OJJ established Community Liaison Councils in each of our regions, another concept that we picked up in our study of the Missouri model. While serving in an advisory capacity to OJJ, council members are encouraged to serve as advocates for OJJ involved youth by educating the general public on the juvenile justice issues particular to each region of the state.

Collaboratively, we can come together to develop strategic objectives and identify the available resources on a community, state or national level to best serve our youth and communities.

Faith Based/ Community Based Mentoring Partners

In 2013, staff facilitated youths' community linkage with volunteer teams. OJJ continued to reach out to religious and community organizations regarding the Faith-Based Team Mentoring Initiative. They met with pastors in the New Orleans area, and with volunteers from the River Parish area, who received mentor training last year. Those volunteers are ready to support youth who are being released and returning to that community. Appropriate youth were identified in an effort to the narrowing of community targets.

OJJ regional managers and facility directors were engaged to support the initiative, and flyers were sent to all regional offices and facilities across the state to post where needed. Bridge City staff and the Family Liaison met with representatives from the LSU Ag center to discuss a grant to fund mentoring at BCCY. We also have been in contact with the national trainer for Kairos Prison Ministry International. Swanson's retired volunteer coordinator, Pastor Ricky James, and

our Family Liaison attended faith-based mentor training sponsored by the United Methodist Church in an effort to attract and train volunteers.

The volunteer team from 6th Baptist Church of New Orleans met with a youth released from Bridge City, at his workplace. He was in the culinary training program at Café Reconcile, completed his training and is now employed at the Café. The Church of the Burning Fire mentored a Jetson youth was stepped down.

Restorative Justice in the community

Swanson's Second Chance Kennels had a successful year in 2013; 17 youth handlers trained 12 dogs, of which 10 were adopted to their forever homes.

Swanson opened Second Chance Kennels, in partnership with the Humane Society Adoption Center of Monroe (HSAC), in September 2012. HSAC houses dogs and puppies that have been surrendered, and does not euthanize them unless all other alternatives have been exhausted. As a dog completes the Second Chance program, it is returned to the HSAC center more adoptable and more likely to find permanent homes.

The kennel provides an exceptional opportunity for incarcerated youth to provide a community service by training and caring for unwanted dogs, to make them more adoptable. The youth train and care for the dogs, and benefit by developing good work habits and valuable vocational skills. While socializing and training the dogs, youth learn therapeutic strategies that help them succeed when they transition back into their communities. Youth in this type of program often demonstrate reduced aggression, empathy for others, respect for living creatures, and development of important leadership skills. The young men gain self-confidence, the ability to work as a team, empathy for other living things, and learn positive reinforcement skills and patience.

This opportunity is a "win-win" for the youth and the dogs. Both HSAC and OJJ believe that everyone and everything deserves a second chance. With this training, our youth come to understand that there is a humane way to approach life. One of the biggest rewards for the youth is the unconditional love and devotion of the dogs they train. The program has a rehabilitative effect on everyone involved – both dogs and youth.

Escapes

None. No further comment seems necessary. Great job, everyone!

The Year Ahead

The legislative session is here and it's always interesting to see what that brings for the agency and the effect of the budget on the fiscal year that begins in the middle of the calendar year. But whatever the legislature mandates, OJJ will still focus on the mission and our core program areas. PREA will continue be a major focus as we comply with federal standards mandated to be implemented by August. We plan to break ground on the Acadiana facility, and we will soon celebrate the anniversary of the opening of Columbia.

The transfer of the Jetson youth took place early in 2014, so a major focus this year will be on how to replace the aging structures on the Jetson site with a new, state-of-the art regional facility to serve the capital area.

As the years go by, certain things become second nature and the "lingo" becomes a part of our culture. EBPs (evidence-based practices for those of you who are not program–area staff) and innovative programming have become routine, but never taken for granted. These are the things that are largely responsible for the agency's continued success in meeting our mission, but I never lose sight of the most important part of the equation – our staff. You have proven time and again that our people are OJJ's greatest resource. I am proud to serve alongside each of you, and I look forward to another successful year.

My thanks to you all, wherever you serve, and what role you play. YOU ARE OJJ.

Sincerely,
Dr. Mary L. Livers
Dr. Mary L. Livers, PhD, MSW