

VOL 2, NO. 6, MAY 2010



# the Inside Scoop ...of OJJ

*Mission:*

*The Office of Juvenile Justice protects the public by providing safe and effective individualized services to youth, who will become productive, law-abiding citizens.*



*Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary*

We thought spring would never arrive, but here it is May, and we are already complaining about the heat. Oh, well, that's one of our state pastimes, complaining about the weather. Just wait until July! We are still enjoying the legislative session as well.

I have been traveling and meeting with staff in OJJ locations around the state, and I find it very enjoyable to meet staff that I read about in *The Inside Scoop* every month. I enjoy being able to recognize staff and knowing some of the things you have been doing as you serve our kids and meet the mission.

As usual, this issue is filled with good news and your experiences. We have a section on the activities that every office undertook to provide restorative justice activities for our kids, to commemorate National Crime Victims Awareness Week. We need to make sure that our kids understand the consequences of their decisions and actions – that there is always a victim, even if it's a family member or themselves – and restorative justice projects are a good way to teach them.

I hope you will enjoy this issue, and keep the good news coming.

“Doc”

*Dr. Mary L. Livers*

## THE DAILY MOTIVATOR

### Limitations fall away

Today you will do as much as you think you can do. What if you thought you could do more? Right now you are doing what you are inspired by this moment to do. What if you were inspired to do more? Your thoughts and feelings on their own cannot even lift a feather. Yet they can push you powerfully forward or stop you in your tracks.

Every good and valuable thing you've ever done started as a thought. Imagine what your thoughts can start right now.

Feel the power of your purpose, upon which sits every desire. Think of the possibilities for expressing that purpose today, in your world, in new, unique and beautiful ways.

Think your most inspired thoughts, and feel your most treasured feelings. Then watch as the limitations quickly fall away.

-- Ralph Marston

### Staff Spotlight ... Spotlight on...



**Nita Franklin-Shanklin, Central Office**

“I really love my job and my co-workers,” said **Nita Franklin-Shanklin, assistant to Dr. Livers**. “I have fun at work. And I like to make sure everyone is happy.” Indeed, Nita keeps Dr. Livers happy and on track with her killer schedule, and she manages to help provide a light note every now and again as unofficial chair of the central office Morale Committee. Nita also loves kids, and dedicates an enormous amount of her personal time to providing services to the children of her church.

“Not only does Nita work here to support our office and the executive team, she truly cares about our mission,” said **Deputy Secretary Dr. Mary Livers**. “This shows in the fact that she is organizing a mentoring program at her church, which is a tribute to her desire to make a difference. She is doing that on her own time and of her own initiative. Nita is an extremely generous person and I am glad she is a part of our team.”

“As my assistant, Nita plays an important role in meeting the mission,” Dr. Livers continued. “She supports me and the other members of the executive staff. Nita works very well with the other administrative assistants to make sure we are all supported in the work we do.”

After graduation from Clinton High School and Delta College, Nita began her career in state service at Villa Feliciana, not far from home in rural East Feliciana Parish. “Our family has always been in that area,” Nita noted. She moved to the Division of Administration in downtown Baton Rouge, where she worked in State Purchasing and in Facility Planning and Control with the legendary Roger Magendie. From there, Nita arrived at OYD, with the assistance of **Lynne Geromini**, today an **Administrative Program Director**.

With 30 years of state service, Nita has been with OJJ since 1994. In her 16 years with the agency she has served five deputy secretaries and one deputy assistant secretary. She has seen massive change – within the agency as OJJ has transformed from an agency modeled after the adult correctional system, to a child-centered, rehabilitative and treatment model. She has seen changes in the way work is done.

“In 30 years we have gone from typewriters to computers,” Nita said. “I’ve seen so much change. It bothers me when I hear people say we are going backwards, because I know that is not true.”

“I feel like part of the team,” Nita said. “When morale is down for some reason, I will let Doc know that we need to do something to get people back up again,” Nita continued. “It bothers Doc to know that people are unhappy.” Enter the

Morale Committee, which brings a smile to central office faces with a luncheon here, munchies and ice cream there.

“My approach is natural, I have a knack for making people laugh,” Nita said. “I am a people person - it’s just a natural thing.”

If you have ever had the pleasure of spending time with Nita, two things are very apparent. She has a collection of pictures of children on her desk, and she also possesses an irrepressible sense of humor.

“The leadership at OJJ is great, and I think the staff is motivated toward moving forward,” Nita said. “I like to quote a billboard that I used to see – “happy cows produce good milk.” If employees are happy they will produce. I think our staff feels valued now more than ever, especially with Doc motivating all staff to get an education.”

Getting an education is not necessarily for the agency, Nita said. “Furthering our education is a way to set higher standards for ourselves, and can possibly result in promotions and better positions within the agency in the future. Doc is motivating people to set higher standards for themselves.”

As a veteran state employee with 30 years service, Nita could be expected to look forward to retirement and taking it easy. Instead, she is taking coursework online to pursue the Juvenile Justice One-Year Certificate. “When I finally retire, I want to continue to do something with criminal justice,” Nita said. “That’s why I worked to start a mentoring program in our church.”

Pine Grove Baptist Church in Slaughter is the beneficiary of Nita’s boundless energy and love for children. She serves as a youth director and manages the church’s Vacation Bible School. “Along with the youth minister, I am leading the development of a mentoring program for our kids. We are asking for volunteers from within the church and we pair the volunteers with children,” Nita said. “DAS Carolyn Lewis has agreed to conduct a training session for our

volunteers. Then we will pair the right person with the right child.”

“We have a teacher who will serve as a resource person who can help the mentors go in the right direction to get help and services if needed, for their child,” Nita continued. “The mentor is responsible for contacting their child at least once a week. We are not there to be the parent or to discipline the child, but to help where we can. We have a lot of single parents, and people often need assistance. The mentors will meet with the parent and the child to get a game plan.” The mentor committee meets monthly to discuss what is going on and plan activities such as field trips for the children. For instance, a member of the church has a farm, where kids can visit and see how food is grown.

Nita is in charge of Pine Grove’s Vacation Bible School, a program she has worked with for some six years. “I work for two months in advance to present the week of VBS. We conduct training for the teachers and we have full effect decorations. One reason we are so successful is that we have classes and activities for the parents as well as the kids. VBS is conducted for an entire week, and guests are always invited. We usually have 90 to 100 people every night.” And then there is a meal and fellowship every night after the class session.

“I always wanted to work with kids,” Nita said. “I prayed to be able to work with children. I wanted to be a Probation Officer but I was told I was too easy-going.” Nita laughs when she says she was accused of wanting to take all the kids home with her. “I cry too much, too,” she said. “I was told I could never arrest a kid, and when I saw a kid that was shackled, I was so angry. Then I cried.”

“I really just love kids,” Nita says, “it’s amazing that I have only one of my own.” Her daughter Kashanna has two children, Taylor, 13 and Marleigh, 19 months. Nita has four stepchildren, one of whom has provided a grandchild, Kaleb, 5, to Nita and her husband Leroy Shanklin.

In what little spare time she has, Nita enjoys reading (John Grisham is a favorite author) and

watching movies (comedies are best). “Life is so congested that sometimes what I would like is a little extra sleep,” Nita said. Life is centered around work and church, but she will sometimes find time to shop. “I like to shop, but I’m a reasonable shopper. I don’t shop til I drop.” And on Sundays, Nita spends time with her mother and aunt.

Nita is a native of Slaughter in East Feliciana Parish. She relates that there were no little girls to play with when she was a child. “I spent most of my time in trees and on the railroad track with my brother and three cousins. If I wanted to play with dolls I had to play by myself. I got to play with other girls on the weekend. And I was always in trouble.”

Even though Nita’s work at OJJ is at central office, she does not shy away from contact with OJJ youth when necessary. After Hurricane Gustav, when Jetson’s population more than doubled while sheltering youth from Bridge City, Nita was among the first office staff to volunteer to help out at Jetson by working in the kitchen. She arrived at 3 a.m. on several mornings to help prepare breakfast and returned to serve lunch and dinner.

Whether it’s keeping Dr. Livers’ office running efficiently or working with children at her church, Nita Franklin-Shanklin exemplifies the meaning of meeting the mission. And, she does it all with laughter and a smile on her face.

### **Transitions...Comings and Goings.....**

welcome to new members of the OJJ Family:

**Alexandria**

**Jessica Howard, Probation & Parole Off. 1**

**Bridge City**

**Sheryl Banks, Social Worker 5-B**

**Lacora Crouch, Correction Sergeant**

**Lake Charles**

**Corey Harmon, Field Agent**

**Retirements:**

**Jetson**

**Leo Brown, Correction Sergeant-Master**

**Lindsey Sanders, Correction Sergeant**

### **CQIS POLICY UPDATES**

A.1.5 Channels of Communication, 4/4/10

A.2.20 Critical Incident Stress Management Program, 4/5/10

B.8.17 Polygraph Testing of Youth, 4/5/10

C.1.18 Facility Tours 4/27/10

### **OJJ POLICIES ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE**

**By Lynne Geromini, Administrative Program Director, CQIS**

CQIS was given a challenge a few months ago by Dr. Livers to get the OJJ Policies and all attachments on the website ASAP.

To accomplish this, every policy and attachment had to be converted to an Adobe document. With the assistance of **Becky Richardson, Administrative Coordinator, Peggy Guerin, Administrative Assistant, and Phyllis Martello, Executive Management Officer**, this portion of the project was accomplished in record time. IT staff took it from there, and with the expertise of **Sean Labat, IT Project Leader, Wade Campbell and Vy Nguyen, IT Applications Programmer Analysts**, the documents have all been posted to the website.

You can access the policies by choosing “Law & Policy” on the left side of the home page, and then choose “Policy” from the drop down list. Please take a few minutes to view the site. If any corrections are needed, please forward an e-mail to [Phyllis.Martello@la.gov](mailto:Phyllis.Martello@la.gov).

### **May 2010 Bi-Annual QA Reviews**

The May 2010 bi-annual reviews at the three secure care facilities will mark the fifth round of bi-annual reviews since the process began in May 2008. The schedule for May is BCCY: May 11-13; SCY: May 18-20; JCY: May 25-27.

The bi-annual process continues to grow. In November 2009, **Kim Mims, Director of Education**, and her staff joined the Bi-Annual

QA Review team in order to conduct the State Review during this time frame as well.

The current bi-annual process could not be accomplished within the designated timeframe without the knowledge and assistance of every participating team member. Both secure and non-secure staff continue to provide assistance to us twice a year, and we are extremely grateful for them. We know how busy everyone is and want to thank the members of the team, as well as the facility staff in advance, and for the continued dedication to the process.

We look forward to seeing everyone again in May 2010!!

## Restorative Justice Program Kicks Off with National Crime Victims Awareness Week

A newly formed All-OJJ Restorative Justice Committee is working to implement a coordinated program of restorative justice projects for youth in our secure facilities as well as those receiving community-based services. The first initiative was National Crime Victims Awareness Week.

Committee members are **Director of Treatment Annette Arthur, Facilities; Rashied Cormier, Bridge City; Program Manager Nancy Gautreau, Community Based Services; Communications Director Jerel Giarrusso, chair; Education Specialist Lou Bertha Gloston; Chaplain Ricky James, Swanson; Major Joann King, Jetson; Principal Ronnie Knox, Jetson Education; Staff Development Director Fran Martin; Assistant Secretary Girard Melancon and Principal William Lee, Swanson Education.**

Following are some of the activities undertaken to commemorate National Crime Victims Awareness Week.

## Alexandria OJJ

Renaissance Home for Youth had residential boys and girls participate in a poster contest. **PPO Rodney McNeal** judged the posters. First and second place, male and female, were awarded gift cards. All youth participated in a pizza dinner surrounding the judging and the awarding of prizes. The winning posters are being displayed in the OJJ lobby. Winners were: **Female 1<sup>st</sup> place: Dawn; 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Kristina. Male 1<sup>st</sup> place: Montrell; 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Olanzo.**



*Renaissance Home for Youth Poster contest.*

AMI-Alexandria had a poster contest as well. The winning male and female posters were selected by **PPO Jency Moore**. The winners were given gift cards to one of the new restaurants opened near the school.

*Below: PPO Jency Moore Dixon and Issac Williams, AMIKids Alexandria Executive Director, congratulate Gatloyn Blue on his winning essay for National Crime Victims' Rights Week. As the winning student, Gatloyn received a Chic-Fil-A gift card from OJJ and*



*lunch at CiCi's Pizza from AMIKids Alexandria for his inspired work.*

## Baton Rouge OJJ

**PPO Naomi Rodney, PPO Steven Dukes, PPO Marina Jenkins, PPO Keondra Riley, and PPO Yolanda Latimer** attended an assembly at AMI for National Crime Victim Awareness Week. The guest speakers were victims of violent crimes who came to speak about how crime and violence has changed their lives. The event also included poetry reading, singing, and an art show to bring awareness to the aftermath of violent crimes.



*AMIKids assembly for Victim Awareness.*

## Hammond OJJ

OJJ staff brought Crime Victim Awareness week to the attention of Truth 180, YSB-St. St Tammany, and other providers, who agreed to incorporate Victim Awareness to all of their groups this week. New Directions youth made and sold bracelets with the proceeds going to a charity for victims. **PPO Kevin Kulivan** brought some to the office for the Hammond OJJ employees to purchase. At our staff meeting, one of our employees who was a victim of three burglaries talked about how crimes affect the victims.

## Jetson Center for Youth

Each dormitory was responsible for celebrating Victim Awareness Week in a special way. The activities included:

- Poster Contest
- Poem Contest
- Balloon Ceremony

- Essay Contest
- Creative greeting cards
- Memorial Balloons
- "Free your Mind"
- Role Play

This was a week of excitement, fun activities, emotional testimonies and intense groups on victimization. **Youth T. Carter** (1<sup>st</sup> place winner) created a poster titled "Play Time Over" in which he reflected on being a victim as well as victimizing others. **Youth R. Freeman** (2<sup>nd</sup> place winner) created a poster honoring his deceased brother and sister who were killed at a young age. **R. Waters** (3<sup>rd</sup> place winner) created a poster on abuse titled "How does he treat her so." A special thanks to **Principal Knox, Ms. Barnardez, Ms. Stewart and Ms. Sheppard** for judging the contest.

The ideals we celebrate this week give hope to all that we must learn the power of fairness, dignity and respect.

## Lafayette OJJ

The students at the VOA Day Program in Lafayette participated in a poster contest for Crime Victims Week. Iberia Parish **PPO Justin Beasley**, St. Mary Parish **PPO Kevin Broussard** and St. Martin Parish **PPO Sam Moore** judged the contest. The posters were judged on creativity and theme. Winners were awarded free-dress days at the program.



*Left to right: PPOs Sam Moore, Justin Beasley, and Kevin Broussard, judging the posters.*

**Lake Charles OJJ**



**PPO3 Monet Newman** brainstormed a great idea for our office to recognize Crime Victim's Awareness Week. Monet proposed that we either landscape our new building or decorate our office's porch and entrances with planters and spring flowers. To quote Monet, "The planting could be done in honor of the victims of crime, as a way of symbolizing a new life for them, their families, and their community. At the same time, it would help "spruce up" the outside of our new building and would promote teamwork within the office." It was further proposed that the planting would symbolize new growth for victims and their families.

We researched colors and decided that we would utilize appropriate colors in flowers and ribbons to symbolize victims. **GREAT IDEA, MONET!** Our office completed the project on April 20.

**PPO3 Monet Newman** (*pictured at right*) volunteered to shop for supplies, donated unused planters from her home, and made a great financial contribution to the plants. **PPS Melissa Cross, PPO Delisa Clark, PPO Karli Pullard, PPO Angie Stevens, CWA Annette Stoddard and CWA Erline Pierce** donated money for the cost of flowers, planters, etc. **PPO Hollie Comeaux and RM Ann Vick**, brought supplies, such as potting soil.



*RM Ann Vick*



*Lake Charles OJJ bloomed for National Crime Victims Awareness Week, above and below.*



## Monroe OJJ

In recognition of National Crime Victim's Awareness Week, Monroe OJJ organized an essay contest for our youth entitled, "What If I Were a Victim of My Own Crime"? The idea was the brainstorm of **PPO3 Jennifer Bible**. Our staff donated money and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place cash prizes were awarded. Monroe OJJ also sponsored a poster contest for youth at Johnny Robinson's Boys Home. A cash prize was awarded to the winning entry.

## New Orleans OJJ

AMIKids utilized the Victim Impact Lessons, starting with Unit 1 -3 as educational material to enhance our kids' knowledge about how their actions affect individuals physically, emotionally and spiritually. AmiKIDS has agreed to implement the Victim Impact Curriculum in their program indefinitely to educate and inform our kids how their actions affect everyone.

At AMIKIDS-Jefferson Victim Impact Awareness was taught to enhance knowledge of how actions can have an adverse affect on individuals physically, emotionally, financially and spiritually. Victim Awareness is being been adopted as a permanent component of the AMIKIDS curriculum.



*Conscientious Thinkers*

## Shreveport OJJ

Shreveport OJJ staff and clients participated with the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Department in observance of Crime Victim's Awareness Week by attending an Informational Awareness Fair. A press conference was held with **Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover** and **Caddo Parish Sherriff Steve Prator**. **PPS Steve Martino** and **PPO Daniel Barnard** were featured on KTBS' local news broadcast of the event.

A community clean-up project in conjunction with AMI Red River was held, where youth worked on cleaning up and beautifying the local area.

## Swanson Center for Youth

**Chaplain Ricky James** reported that youth were given an opportunity to make a list of persons they have wronged on dissolvable paper, as a way to ask for forgiveness, and as a way to seek forgiveness from those who have wronged them (the youth). When placed in water, the paper with the names dissolved, as a means of asking for forgiveness. **Principal William Lee** said that the youth participated in art, essay and poetry contests in school and their dormitories.

Swanson youth performed cleanup duties along roadsides and at J. S. Clark Cemetery. The Monroe New Star wrote a positive story with photos, about their work. A total of 20 youth assisted in the clean up project.



*This picture appeared in the Monroe News Star. Youth are J. Springer, L. Hickman, J. Cadis, D. Wallace and staff were Capt. William Reed, Lt. Marcell Higgins and Rodney Ward.*

### Tallulah OJJ

PPOs had clients make posters and write essays about the effect their actions had on the victims. At Christian Acres youth planted a flower garden in honor of victims and wrote letters of apology (only to schools for damage to property, etc.)

### Thibodaux OJJ

AMIKIDS-Bayou Lafourche Region had a Victim's Awareness Day. In their therapeutic groups, they watched a movie about "Who are the Victim's of Crime?" (the victim, family, community and perpetrator) They held "Mock Candelight Vigil" where the youth colored sheets with a picture of candles and wrote letters to their victim on the back of the sheet. The youth also participated in "Walking One Day in the Shoes of the Victim". They had a canvas shoe and each youth wrote one word to describe how a victim feels on the shoe.

Victim Awareness... "remembering what it feels like to walk in their shoes." The group discussed the meaning and purpose for victim awareness. The group brainstormed and completed a web map identifying all victims of crime/wrongdoing. The group discussed making amends, restitution, and apologizing. The group learned and role-played Skillstreaming Skill 13: Apologizing. Each student wrote an apology to one individual that they had hurt and colored their candle color sheet.



Victim Awareness Week.

Each student wrote one word that describes how it feels to be a victim on the shoes. The students responded really well to the activities. There was also a bulletin board at the facilities with their activities regarding

AMIKIDS – Donaldsonville youth planted a garden at the African American Museum in Donaldsonville and go every week to maintain the garden. The youth are also planting a vegetable garden at the facility.



### Thibodaux Regional Office

#### Congratulations

**PPO 3 Sandra Rodrigue** was chosen **Employee of the Month for March.** PPO Rodrigue has been a member of the OJJ family for 10 years. She works in a diligent and efficient manner with our youth as well as with our partners within the community.

We would also like to recognize **PPO Tressa Gros.** She was reallocated to a PPO 2.

We also want to recognize some of our youth for their accomplishments. **Jhi A.** began the Youth Challenge Program in February and he is still going strong. **Hakeem W.** was recently accepted into the Youth Challenge Program which began in April. Kudos for the most significant accomplishment goes out to **Antony K.,** who was recently released from Swanson, and was accepted into Kilgore College in Texas. He will attend Kilgore orientation in May and plans to play football. All these youth are supervised by **PPO 2 Tressa Gros.**

### AMIKids Play Basketball



*AMIKids-Donaldsonville Basketball Team*



*AMIKids-Bayou Region Basketball Team*

## Tallah Regional Office

**PPO Rob Johnson** and **PPO Truett Glass** attended training entitled Street Gangs: the Prison Connection, in Pearl, MS.

Everyone did well on the recent PPCT refresher course.

**PPO Truett Glass** attended the Tensas Transition Fair in April.

**PPO Rob Johnson, PPO Kim Green, PPO LaJuana Harrell, PPO Jessica Southern, PPO Fred Laing, PPS Johnnie Bowman and RM Ruth Stephens** attended the Northeast Judicial Juvenile Justice Summit held recently at the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

The Lake Providence Junior Auxiliary put on a children's theatre production of "Chicken Little" in April. **PPO Kim Green** played the part of the Little Red Hen. Little Red Hen's character is portrayed as the hen who tries to get everyone to help her plant wheat seeds, harvest the wheat, grind the wheat into flour, and then make the flour into bread. Of course, no one will help her. At the end, Little Red Hen hits Foxy Loxy over the head with loaves of bread that she alone baked. Then everyone gets into a scuffle and chases that Foxy Loxy off the farm.

## Swanson Center for Youth

### Volunteer Orientation Held

In April, **Chaplain Ricky James** directed Swanson's annual Volunteer Orientation and Appreciation Day. It was great. Our youth choir sang several Gospel songs, and oh, did they sing. They sang to a crowd of 138 volunteers, who were very generous with their appreciation of the choir. The orientation training was presented by our Staff Development trainers, **Mr. James Woods**, and **Ms. Delbert Blunt**. They did a magnificent job of going over the volunteer orientation manual. The volunteers were very attentive, and expressed how helpful and thorough it was. During the orientation, our volunteers were served a hearty meal prepared by our dining hall staff. **Director Carolyn Atkins, Ms. Bernice Hopkins, Mrs. Linda James (wife of Chaplain James), Ms. Blunt and Mr. Woods** (while rotating teaching) all wore aprons and served the volunteers.

### Revival at Swanson

Youth are given the opportunity to participate in spiritual activities if they choose.

Our Sixth Annual Revival at Swanson Center for Youth was held at Good Shepherd Chapel. It was hosted by the Pentecostal of the Twin Cities Church of West Monroe. They came with worship leaders, band members and singers each night. Our choir performed the opening song each night of the revival. They did very well and received a standing ovation from both the youth and our guests who were present. On Tuesday night, 136 youth and 21 volunteers were present to kick off the revival. They were all very excited about the revival. On Wednesday, 91 youth and 20 volunteers were present. On Thursday, there were 126 youth and 25 volunteers present. One of the special guests was **Mr. Byron Hypolite**, who is a Christian rap artist. He performed a couple of his raps. He has a CD out entitled "Round Trip." He was the guest speaker Thursday night and the youth

really connected with him. Several youth made confessions and rededicated their lives during the revival. Several youth also confessed to be saved and requested to be baptized. There was support from **Director Carolyn Atkins** each night, and **Director Vernon Foy**, **Director Pam Green**, and **Group Leader Bernice Hopkins** were present to support the revival.

### Epiphany Weekend Held

April 16-19 we held Epiphany #17 weekend in the gym. There were 25 youth in attendance each day. The Epiphany Team consisted of 31 volunteers each day. The volunteers interacted with our youth, praying with and for them, doing arts, molding clay, and they allowed the youth to express their feelings, giving them an opportunity to express remorse for what they have done wrong, and seeking forgiveness from those that may have wronged them in the past. The activities enabled them to work together as a team, showing them that we need each other. The youth were also served snacks and meals each day. Each youth who attended the three day weekend was given a t-shirt, hygiene items, and letters to carry home. It was a very exciting weekend for our youth.

### Habitat Groundbreaking

By **Robert Moffett, Carpentry Instructor**

Students from Swanson attended the Habitat for Humanity groundbreaking ceremony on Earth Day, April 22. This marks the beginning of a 12 house project that we will partner to build. Swanson students **Jenerio Y.**, **Paul R.**, **Frank S.**, **Lonnell T.**, **Dallas P.**, **Bradley S.**, **Anthony P.**, and **Antony K.** under the direction of **Robert Moffett, Carpentry Instructor** and **Lee Williams, Paraeducator**, have begun an eight week commitment to build as many houses as possible. As of April 23 one house had been topped out and another started.

**Youth Paul R.** said “Working for Habitat for Humanity has been a wonderful experience. I’ve learned things from this class that I probably would never have even thought about. This also provides an opportunity for me to help others. By building these houses, we are providing a safe, comfortable place for someone to live, plus learning lifelong skills at the same time.”



*SCY Youth work on framing up a house.*



*From left: Robert Moffett, Carpentry Instructor; Captain Minnie Castor; Youth Paul R.; Larry Head, Director of Habitat; Charlie Cascio, Habitat for Humanity; Chief Jimmy Bryant, Monroe City Fire Chief.*

Without a doubt, the youth involved in this project are learning a marketable skill that can take them a long way into the future. Irrefutable proof of the benefits rests with a former SCY youth, **John K.** John participated in the summer build of 2009 and upon release from secure care, went to work for Habitat for Humanity. His position was made possible by a grant secured by Habitat. This partnership has made a real impact on the youth participating. I truly look forward to this and other projects like it.

## Shreveport Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO LaTonya Marshall** was honored by being selected as **Shreveport OJJ Employee of the Month** for April.

**PPO Terri Harber** received the **Shreveport OJJ First Quarter 2010 Achievement Award**.

**PPO Terri Harber** has maintained a 100% contact rate for the First Quarter 2010. Several others will receive lunch to be catered by the Shreveport OJJ Supervisors for maintaining 90-100% contact rate.

They include **PPO Sandy Ersoff; PPO Bennie Walters; PPO John Whitlock; PPO Brandy Stratton; PPO Tish Juneau; PPO LaTonya Marshall; PPO Todd Carlisle; PPO Kristen McKee; PPO Natalie Pope; PPO Daniel Barnard; PPO Richard Dukes and PPO Charles Herrmann**. We are very proud of the hard work and dedication that our employees give. Keep up the good work!

**PPO Natalie Pope** attended a CPTP Training course for New Employee Orientation entitled Success Planning Series at the Bossier Parish Office of the Department of Transportation and Development.

**AC4 Shatina Salter, PPS Rick Ladner, PPS Steve Martino and PPS Mitchell Lane** attended Supervisory Training in April at Swanson.

Shreveport OJJ spent time at the Caddo Sherriff's Office Training Academy during April to practice and complete the annual Firearms Qualification. All staff requalified.

## New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

### Congratulations



Region 1 is ecstatic to share with the entire OJJ family that our very own **Probation and Parole Supervisor Justine Aguiar** has been selected to receive the "CJ Outstanding Graduate Scholar Award" from Loyola University, College of Social Sciences. **Justine has acquired a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice**. We are bursting with pride. Way to go Justine!!

The Young Leadership Council (YLC) is alive and well. Its members are currently holding weekly networking meetings in the New Orleans area. Our very own **Social Worker Roxann Tuircuit** has been afforded the opportunity to see them in action. She had nothing but rave reviews for this organization. Roxann noted that YLC is the oldest independent young professional organization in the country. Through volunteer-created community projects, the YLC recruits and retains young professionals. YLC has raised more than \$25 million in support of community projects in and around the New Orleans area since 1986.



*Tomorrow's leaders*

We celebrated **Administrative Professional Day** by giving special recognition and acknowledgement to our support staff for all of the hard work and dedication that they display. We also treated them to a scrumptious meal.



*Our winning team!*

**PPO Daria Melder** proudly tells us that a youth under her supervision, **Xavier H.**, is graduating from Warren Easton High School. Xavier has been accepted into the University of New Orleans for the fall semester. Xavier is not a novice in this arena. He has already experienced college life by attending a class at Dillard University. Xavier is interested in the film industry. See you at the movies!!

**AMIKids Holds LEAP Celebration**



AMIKids-Jefferson presented LEAP Celebration 2010, held recently at its Harvey location.

After a week of testing, it was time for a break. The staff at AMI rewarded the youth with a picnic including hotdogs, hamburgers, jambalaya and a crawfish boil. OJJ staff stopped by to congratulate the youth for a job well done.

*Pictured are Program Specialist Yezette White, PPO Dorothy Crump, AMI Executive Director Malaika Morris, PPO Rosie Collins, PPO Vera Seals and PPO Kristina Koontz.*

**Natchitoches Regional Office**

**Congratulations**



**PPO Christopher Wyatt** was nominated by his peers as **Employee of the Month**.

**Heather Christophe** was promoted from PPO1 to PPO2.

**Making a Difference**

The following youth were recent graduates of the 10th JDC Juvenile Drug Court program: J. Smith, J. Kelly and D. Scarbrough. **PPO2 Chris Wyatt** supervises all the youth in the Drug Court program.

**Announcement**

**PPO Ieisha Beasley** received word that she has been actively deployed to Iraq until March 2011. Please keep her and her three small children in your thoughts and prayers.



*Field staff participated and completed their PPCT refresher course.*

**Community Involvement**



**Northwestern State University Intern Tequila Johnson** successfully completed her internship. Her anticipated graduation date is set for December 17, 2010.



*Ashley Ward and Ieisha Beasley at the Save a Life Tour.*



Special Olympics were held at Northwestern State University recently. The following PPOs attended this event: **Heather Christophe, Jeremy Martin, Brenda Sarpy, Ashley Ward, Deanna Williams and Christopher Wyatt.**

PPO3 Ashley Ward serves on the Special Olympics Committee.



RM Randall Hill's daughter, **Abby**, a member of Kappa Delta at Louisiana Tech University, attended the Pan-Hellenic Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Several PPOs attended the High Impact Alcohol Awareness Program held at Northwestern State University, entitled Drunk Driving Kills: Make a Difference with the Save a Life Tour. Attending were **PPOs Ieisha Beasley, Kelvin Jones, Ashley Ward, and Deanna Williams.**



*Ashley Ward, Deanna Williams and Ieisha Beasley.*



**PPO Kelvin Jones** attended Black History Month program held at Northwestern State University. **SSC4 Nelda Graham** serves on the Black History Committee.

The DARE Health Fest was held recently at Northwestern State University. Staff who attended included **Heather Christophe, Brenda Sarpy, Deanna Williams, and Christopher Wyatt.**



*PPO Sarpy at the DARE Fest.*



*PPOs Christopher Wyatt, Heather Christophe and Brenda Sarpy at the DARE Fest.*

**Celebration!**



Staff wished a “Happy Birthday” to Regional Manger Randall Hill in April. We celebrated the occasion with a coconut cake baked by AC3 Virginia LeVasseur for this special occasion.

**Administrative Staff Monica Breedlove, Rosa Brownlee and Virginia LeVasseur** were presented with gifts from **RM Randall Hill** and **Supervisor Kristen McComic** for Professional Administrative Day!

**Monroe Regional Office**

**Congratulations**

Monroe OJJ would like to congratulate **Chauncey Hunter, daughter of PPO3 Willie Hunter.** Chauncey was recognized at the Ouachita Parish Scholar’s Banquet. She will graduate in May with honors and will attend LSU in the Fall.

**RM Patty Newman and Program Specialist Walteree Barnes** recently toured Methodist Children’s Home in Ruston with the legislative auditors.

**RM Patty Newman, PPS Larry Tolbird, PPS Linda Williams, PPS Orlando Davis, Program Specialist Walteree Barnes and PPO3 Joel McNair** attended the Juvenile Summit held at the ULM Library.

**RM Patty Newman** attended CPTP Training (Individual Differences & Diversity) held at ULM. **PPS Gail Wilson** attended CPTP Training (Developing a Motivated Workgroup) held at ULM. **PPS Linda Wilson, PPS Orlando Davis, PPS Karl Wallace, and PPS Larry Tolbird** attended Leadership Booster Training held in Monroe.

**PPS Orlando Davis** and **Program Specialist Walteree Barnes** attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Models for Change Seminar with the National Resource Bank Consultants held at ULM.

Monroe OJJ enjoyed a Fun Day in April. **PPO3 Patrick Cooper** brought his "big grill" and cooked whatever we wanted. It was a beautiful day and we all ate too much.



*Patrick grilling our lunch.*



*After enjoying our Fun Day lunch, staff gave blood at LifeShare Blood Center in recognition of National Crime Victims Awareness Week. Those donating were PPO3 David McMillan, PPO2 Jeremy Keyes, PPS Linda Williams, PPS Gail Wilson, PPO2 Cheryl Pringle, PPO3 Janice Wheelis, RM Patty Newman and PPO3 Jackie Kindrix. Not shown: Larry Tolbird.*

For **Administrative Professionals Day**, **RM Patty Newman** and her supervisors presented Monroe OJJ's Administrative Assistants with gift cards and breakfast goodies. We appreciate all their hard work.

Monroe OJJ would like to recognize **PPO3 Willie Hunter** for an act of kindness. Willie had a family in need on his caseload, and recently donated clothing to them. Good work, Willie!

## The Monthly Orlandoism

"Can you imagine what I would do if I could do all I can?" -*Sun Tzu*

**Orlandoism:** "Your negative thoughts lead or may be your limitations. By removing the barriers of pessimism, you will realize that you will accomplish much, if not all, you set out to do. It is the law of attraction."

## Lake Charles Regional Office

### Congratulations

We are proud of **Support Staff Erline Pierce** and **PPO3 Fred Fontenot** for receiving this year's first **Quarterly Employee Awards**.

### Farewell

Lake Charles OJJ said farewell to our **Transport Officer Patrick Broussard**. Patrick was employed with Lake Charles OJJ since August 2007. He was an asset to our office and will be missed. We wish him luck as he begins his career with the Parish Probation Office as a detention center employee.

### Thanks to...

Special thanks to **RM Ann Vick**, **PPS Melissa Cross**, **PPO Alexis Heflin**, and **PPO Monet Newman** for contributing food and time to make the March 26 judges' training and facility tours a huge success.

We appreciate **RM Ann Vick** for her efforts to schedule and plan a tour of Swanson Center for Youth in early May for our officers, DAs and judges.

**PPO2 Rebecca Harmon** and **PPS Ken Vidrine** recently gave a presentation to the Rotary Club in Jefferson Davis Parish to inform them of what we do as an agency. The Rotarians were extremely interested and responsive about such programs as Multi

Systemic Therapy, which can be used as a diversion.

In March **Christopher Lee Soileau**, son of Kristal Pierce and Walter Soileau of Kinder and grandson of Gary Pierce and **Administrative Coordinator 3 Earline Pierce** of Welsh, was awarded the title of "Master Jean Lafitte" for the annual Contraband Days celebration held in Lake Charles each May.

We honored **Administrative Coordinator 3 Earline Pierce** and **Administrative Coordinator 4 Annette Stoddard** on Administrative Professionals' Day. We expressed gratitude through small gifts of appreciation and all wrote words of sentiment. We appreciate all they do for our office.



*Earline and Annette*



*Staff recognize Annette Stoddard, above, and below, Earline Pierce.*



*Team LC OJJ celebrates Administrative Professionals Day.*

**PPO2 Garrick Chambers** celebrated his 30th birthday on April 18. Office staff purchased a candy-filled, megaphone piñata in order to recognize his big birthday and to continue a long-standing joke with Garrick. He is always a good sport! ☺

Always thinking of our kids, **PPO3 Delisa Clark** announced availability of an opportunity for our low-income, minority youth (boys or girls from 7 - 17 years of age) to receive golfing lessons and golfing supplies through a special \$100,000 Tiger Woods grant.

This month, **PPO2 Rebecca Harmon** actually received verbal thanks and was emotionally touched by two of the kids in her caseload. Rebecca has had to make some tough decisions with both of these kids, but both recognize that their lives are better as a result, though they did not think so at first! They

expressed their appreciation for her being fair but firm, when necessary.

**PPO3 Fred Fontenot** and **PPS Ken Vidrine** recently personally treated three Boys Village young men to lunch as a result of their earning all available 700 Positive Behavior points (100%) for the week. This was a challenge set out before them, and they met the challenge. The boys enjoyed the special attention.

Always thinking of the families we serve, **PPO3 Monet Newman** announced a "garage share" (not SALE) to be held in April for local families who need all types of gently used household items commonly found at garage sales. No money was required in exchange. The share was hosted by a local church and done as a blessing to these families. Monet told our staff to send appropriate families.

Thank you to **PPO3 Monet Newman** for volunteering to conduct Shoplifter's Accountability classes for our OJJ kids and for contributing the needed videos and supplies. This is very generous and will be very beneficial to our clients!

**PPO3 Ronald Gilchrist** and **PPO3 Fred Fontenot** again dedicated a Friday afternoon in April to play basketball with residents of Boys Village. This one-on-one involvement is always greatly appreciated by the facility and communicates OJJ's concern for the boys. THANKS AGAIN, guys!

**PPO2 Garrick Chambers** is serving as a Mentor for a YCP youth (M.G.) from an underprivileged family. He meets with the family on a regular basis and maintains contact with the youth. The youth is doing well and is setting future professional & career goals.

## Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

April 17 saw the long-awaited reunion concert of The OJJs. Vermilion and Acadia Parish **Supervisor Ken Stewart** plays accordion with Cajun music group Cajun Accent. The group plays at Landry's Restaurant in New Iberia on a nearly weekly basis. Ken put together another group, consisting of "musically inclined" officers from the Lafayette Office. The group sat in at Landry's in December 2008, and the public clamored for a reunion. The OJJs consists of Ken on accordion, Vermilion Parish **PPO Brian Simpson**, vocals, Vermilion Parish **PPO Jason McCraney** on fiddle, Iberia Parish **PPO Mike Waters** on guitar, St. Mary Parish **PPO Kevin Broussard** on bass guitar and Acadia Parish **PPO Jody Osmer** on washboard. Cajun Accent's **Larry Comeaux** filled in on the drums. The group played "I'm Comin' Home" by Clifton Chenier and "Paper In My Shoe" by Boozoo Chavis. There was a lack of interest by major record labels, but the group said that they didn't want the music to become too corporate... or something like that.



*The OJJs, l-r: Ken Stewart, Brian Simpson, Jason McCraney, Mike Waters, Kevin Broussard and Jody Osmer.*

The Lafayette and Opelousas Offices send appreciation to the region’s firearms instructors, Iberia Parish **PPO Bret Gould** and Lafayette Parish **PPO Courtney Holderman**, for their help in firearms recertification. **Deputy Craig Hebert** of the Iberia Parish Sheriff’s Office was kind enough to let OJJ use the IPSO’s shooting range. The instructors gave of their time for four days, while the Lafayette and Opelousas officers braved the mud and heat to requalify. Thanks to the selflessness of PPOs Holderman and Gould, as well as Deputy Hebert, all officers were requalified.



*Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Manager Sharon Guillory, ready for the mud.*

In April St. Mary Parish **PPO Kevin Broussard** was a guest lecturer at the St. Martin Parish Sheriff’s Office Juvenile Officer Academy. The academy is a two-week course that takes POST-certified officers, and trains them to be specialized in dealing with juvenile offenders. PPO Broussard’s lecture centered around the role of OJJ in the juvenile justice system. PPO Broussard said he enjoys giving the lectures because “it allows the juvenile officers to better understand what OJJ does, and it creates a better working relationship with local law enforcement.”

In April the students and staff at the Opelousas VOA Day Program hosted a potluck lunch to show their appreciation for the Opelousas Police Department. **Madelyn Rosette, Division Director** for the program said, “Looking at the pictures made me

realize how dedicated and supportive the staff is about reaching out into the community. Supporting others will only help us to receive support in return.”



*Above and below: VOA’s Potluck lunch in appreciation for the Opelousas Police Department.*



### A Joyful Noise!

By PPS Steve Neef

One April evening, nearly 40 OJJ clients in non-secure custody and residential placement gathered together in the large activity room at Lafayette OJJ for some good old healthy entertainment. Boys and girls from the Stepping Stones group home, the National Mentors foster family program and the Children’s Shelter were treated to some toe-tapping, hand-clapping, sing-along tunes from a local teen band.

*God’s Girlz* (as they are called), which performs for youth groups, festivals and other

functions, offering contemporary gospel music selections, even provided door prizes for all and refreshments to go along with their mini-concert. During the intermission one of the female residents from the Lafayette group home shared her testimony of how her life had improved since tending to her spiritual health through faith-based activities.

The 12 or so staff in attendance from the different facilities also enjoyed the event and expressed their appreciation for such a fun and inspiring evening. It was truly rewarding to see the young people warming up to the group so quickly and participating in the singing.

**PPSs Steve Neef and Robert Guirard**, as well as **PPOS Paige Sieber, Karla Meranto and Justin Beasley** stayed after hours for the “gig” helping with “crowd control.” **PPO Meranto** videotaped the exciting event. (*God’s Girlz* teen band is available to play at similar functions should other regions or facilities be interested.)

## Book Review: God in My Corner

By PPS Steve Neef

As some of you may know, former heavyweight boxing champion of the world George Foreman has dedicated the past three decades of his life to helping others, especially at-risk troubled youth, to redirect their lives toward responsible living (sound familiar?).

Well, not long ago the ex-champ wrote a book entitled *God in My Corner* that I would like to highly recommend to our juvenile clients and agency staff alike. It’s an interesting read with plenty of advice for wise and healthy living. Mr. Foreman has gained much insight from his struggles in life and has learned some very helpful secrets about overcoming adversity and staying positive when the going gets tough. Once a vicious street fighter and then a fearsome opponent in the ring (ask Smokin’ Joe Frazier or Ken Norton!) for years good old George has fought another formidable

opponent — the struggles of everyday living. Why not treat yourself to this excellent book and share it with someone you know when you are finished. Or, perhaps you could purchase it as a gift for someone you know who could use the treat. I guarantee you that you will feel good for trying to help out your fellow man.

## Jetson Center for Youth

### Congratulations to Employees of the Year

#### Support Employee of the Year: Thaddues Williams, Food Production Worker

Ms. Williams continues to excel in her job performance despite the reduction in staff in her department. She is professional, courteous and self-motivated. She shows initiative and needs little if any supervision in the performance of her duties.

#### YouthCare Worker of the Year: Master Sergeant Emanuel McClinton

M/Sgt. McClinton is a dedicated and caring employee. He always engages the youth, has good documentation and supports the LAMOD process. He has good eyes and ears on supervision, he redirects the youth and supports the mission of the department. M/Sgt. McClinton has been assigned to the Fast Track dormitories for several years and he knows the program well. He has assisted in teaching other staff the program. He communicates well, fosters a safe environment and works well with the different disciplines.

#### Treatment Employee of the Year: Social Services Counselor Sandra Sims

Ms. Sims is a team player and she works well with all disciplines. She relates well with parents and youth. She has been assigned to three dormitories and she continues to adjust as needed to the staff and youth. She has

received commendations for her records being in high compliance during the CQIS audits. She is caring and generous in assisting staff and awarding youth.

#### **Education Employee of the Year: Teacher Andrea Barnardez**

Mrs. Barnardez has a passion for the youth at Jetson Center for Youth. She was instrumental in ensuring that youth had everything they needed for graduation. Mrs. Barnardez is a self-motivator who does not hesitate to use all means necessary to get the job done. She is generous in spending her own funds to buy necessary items for decoration of the gymnasium and bulletin boards. The principal relies on Mrs. Barnardez to provide support and guidance to the Education Department.

#### **Supervisor of the Year: Major James Spears**

Major Spears is a dedicated, hard working supervisor who is always available to staff and youth. He is responsive, assists subordinates, supports the LA MOD process and holds his subordinates accountable. He is a role model for the youth, motivates and supports their accomplishments and redirects when necessary. He is an SCM instructor and regularly provides training in roll call. Major Spears fosters a safe environment and cooperates with all disciplines.

#### **Administrative Employee of the Year: Executive Staff Officer Barbara Bell**

Ms. Bell was awarded the Facility Director's Award of Excellence in January 2009. Through her efforts Jetson's compliance in the Performance Planning and Review process was 100%. She is thorough and timely on all her work assignments. Ms. Bell is a team player and she regularly volunteers her assistance to staff. Ms. Bell is a true professional and works well with all disciplines and the youth. She is cross-trained in many areas of service at the facility. She never questions extra assignments and often

volunteers without being asked. Ms. Bell has an excellent attendance record. She is reliable and inspires and sets a good working example for staff. She is willing to provide assistance or directs staff to persons who can assist.

#### **Jetson Alum Shines in His New Job**



*Michael R. at work.*

Members of the Scenic Alternative High School faculty recently showed support for one of their former youth by dining at the local Ralph and Kacoo's restaurant in Baton Rouge, where Michael R. is currently employed. Michael has been enjoying his new job as a member of the wait staff/ food runner. He is planning to attend a local college in the fall while continuing to work parttime at the restaurant. Staff members who were present to help Michael celebrate his success as a member of the work force were **Denise Clause, Andrea Barnardez, Ms. Rash, Ms. Stewart, Mr. Neddie, Ms. Ellis and Ms. Sheppard.**

#### **Youth Attend Church with Staff**

Spring Dormitory staff and youth attended church with **Mst. Sgt. Frances Bailey** and Family at the Church of Christ on Hollywood St. Nine youth along with Group Leader **Major Oscar King, Counselor Sandra Sims, Youth Care Staff Jumar Ficklin and Lyneka Sanders** attended the services. After the service the youth and staff were invited to stay and enjoy a delicious meal and

encouraging words with the pastor and other church members. A group session was conducted on Monday highlighting the church event. Some youth expressed that they really enjoyed the sermon which touched on family values and making the right decisions. The youth expressed their excitement and how much they enjoyed the services and are looking forward to going again. It was an opportunity for staff and youth to bond in meeting the vision, by embracing the community, which will help the youth to become responsible individuals.

## Hammond Regional Office

### Superstar

The Hammond OJJ Superstar for April was **PPO3 Christy Ford**. She was recognized by **PPO1 Mike Marques** for taking time to help him set up a youth on EMP.

### Officers Help Our Clients

**PPO3 Penny Buniff** and **PPO3 Amy Johnson** recently assisted two clients on their caseloads by getting with their parents and helping purchase items needed for the Youth Challenge Program. Penny and Amy both went through training to become mentors to their clients at Camp Beauregard. Penny is currently a mentor to youth Jennifer F.

### Firearms Requalification

In April, 19 PPOs and PPSs from Hammond OJJ requalified at the Tangipahoa Sheriff's Range in Amite. Everyone requalified on the first attempt with an average score of 112 for the group. **Jim Richardson, range master and POST instructor**, gave credit to our instructors, **Johnny Prentice, Mark Davis, and Roy Wittorf** for being such good instructors. He also said that we had a group of really good shooters and that they were a pleasure to work with.

## We Recognize Our Administrative Professionals

Our administrative professional staff was recognized on April 21<sup>st</sup> with cards, gift cards, and a certificate that listed reasons that they are special.

### Central Office



*A Mother's Day Lunch was hosted by the wonderful men of OJJ with Wade Campbell and Vy Nguyen taking the lead. The ladies were served a variety of pizzas, dessert and drinks. Several door prizes were awarded. In an attempt to ensure job security, Wade promised that next year the men would treat the ladies to a crawfish boil.*

### Congratulations

Central Office recently celebrated two weddings.

**CQIS Program Manager Katie Kirkpatrick** and **LPB staff member Todd Justice** celebrated their nuptials with a beautiful ceremony at the home of Katie's grandmother.

**DataBase Administrator Shawn Sellars** and his new bride **Bridgette** are honeymooning in Jamaica. They were married recently at the lovely Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church.

Congratulations to **Budget Manager Kimberly Brent-Jones** and her husband **Will** on their new asset! Long-awaited baby **Brent Nicholas Jones** was born April 14, weighing 7lb., 7 oz., and was 20 inches long.



*Kim Jones with Baby Brent.*

### United Way Presents Award to Central Office

United Way presented central office with a plaque in thanks for a successful United Way campaign. Following is a note sent from **Meredith Manship**, our United Way representative, to Adm. Asst. Peggy Guerin:

We definitely enjoyed the presentation! Janile and I walked out and we both said what a nice group of people you work with. And Dr. Livers is such a nice woman. You guys earned every bit of that award and presentation. You did such a FANTASTIC job!!! We greatly appreciate your support! You know...without people like you at OJJ we could not do what we do. Thank you again!



*Left, Janile Parks and Dr. Livers remove fingerprints from the plaque presented by United Way for a successful campaign, above. Right, the properly cleaned-up plaque is presented.*

**Communications Director Jerel Giarrusso** and her husband **Ted Hansen** recently celebrated 30 years of marriage. Ted wanted to celebrate with a trip to an exotic location. And they did. A long-planned mission trip to Honduras had been postponed several times and was re-scheduled for that date. Ted and Jerel signed on without telling the rest of the mission team about their personal milestone.



Their church, Luke 10:27, has a sister church in a tiny Honduran village. The seven-person mission team taught 65 children, prepared a meal (500 plates) and showed a film for almost 400 guests. T and J report it was a grand way to mark their anniversary.



*Children of Iglesia Abrazos Abierto (Open Arms Church) in San Antonio de la Cuesta, Honduras, listen to a Bible story.*

### Bridge City Center for Youth

#### Congratulations

Join us in congratulating our 1st Quarter Employee Award Winners for a job well done. Security: Seletar Gosa; Treatment: Dorothy Favorite; Administrative: Sharonda Smith; Support: Charles McClean; Education: Bella Berry; Supervisor: Mary Gatlin.

### Culinary Arts Students Shine for MacArthur Tour

Bridge City hosted a tour and a luncheon for the MacArthur Foundation. The tour was kicked off in the Culinary Arts building with a luncheon prepared by **Chef Ron Sonnier's** Culinary Arts students. The students spent a whole week preparing items for the lunch and decorating the classroom. Their attention to details was amazing, from ironing the tablecloths, napkins, uniforms and setting the tables with spotless stemmed goblets, centerpieces and silverware, to making sure the plates would be garnished with impeccable accuracy. The students were so proud to be able show off their talents as upcoming culinarians.

The menu was designed for both seafood lovers and those who are unable to eat seafood. Chef Sonnier's menu started off with a delicious salad of mixed greens tossed in a special Cane Syrup Vinaigrette dressing topped with colorful pepper slices and purple onion. He showed the students how to stuff flounder in turbans with crab and shrimp and served that along side a special spicy shrimp over creamy garlic grits and accompanied by buttered, julienne-sliced zucchini sauté.

For those unable to eat seafood, the students prepared roast pork tenderloin topped with a special mushroom demi-glace, wild rice pilaf and the zucchini.

Everyone was served Louisiana strawberry freshly baked cheesecake. When it was all over the students got to sample their work and really impressed themselves with what they had accomplished, not to mention the pride they felt when Dr. Livers introduced them to the guests, who gave them a standing ovation. Chef Sonnier had divided the students into two groups for the presentation, one group in the kitchen and the other serving. Both teams did a great job!

Here is a recipe for your collection from Chef and the Culinary Arts students:

### Cane Syrup Vinaigrette

Serves 6

1/2 cup olive oil

1/2 cup Steen's cane vinegar

1 tbl. Steen's cane syrup

1 tsp. Creole mustard

1/4 tsp. Tabasco jalapeño pepper sauce (the green hot sauce)

1/4 tsp. black pepper

2 tsps. finely chopped green onion tops, optional

1 finely minced garlic clove, optional

1. Whisk together olive oil, cane vinegar and cane syrup.

2. Whisk in the Creole mustard, jalapeño pepper sauce and black pepper. If desired, mix in finely chopped green onion tops and minced garlic clove.

I leave out the garlic when I add fresh pears or apples to a green salad.

### A letter to Dr. Livers from Robert L. Gallucci, President of the MacArthur Foundation:

Dear Dr. Livers,

Thank you for being so generous with your and your staff's time and schedule to permit Will Miller and me to visit the Bridge City Center for Youth. While we got only a brief look, we saw enough to appreciate the commitment you and your staff have made to make the most of the opportunity to help young people in your custody and care achieve success when they leave.

We especially enjoyed and felt privileged to have our luncheon prepared and served by Chef Sonnier and his wonderful assistants and the opportunity to meet some of the staff and youth at Bridge City and hear their stories. I understand you would like to see other programs prepare youth for opportunities when they return to the community. It is

clear OJJ cannot accomplish this by itself. From our other meetings, it appears business leaders are poised and ready to help.

Our discussions with you, your colleagues, and the youths at Bridge City reinforced our decision to select Louisiana to participate in the *Models for Change* initiative. Years of effort have begun to pay off, and we value our ongoing partnership with the state to help accelerate the pace of reform and establish Louisiana as a successful model for other states to emulate.

I wish you continued success in all your efforts on behalf of all Louisiana's children.

Sincerely,  
Robert L. Gallucci  
President

### Youth Enjoy Off Campus Outing

Once again we had a successful outing with the young men on Hope Dormitory. They were very excited as we were leaving the campus. The young men utilized their social skills at a restaurant and thoroughly enjoyed attending the movies. They were very grateful for the opportunity and are motivated to earn future rewards.

### Baton Rouge Regional Office

By PPO Myron Theriot

### Hats Off to Our Officers

Baton Rouge OJJ would like to give a special thank you to **PPO Keondra Riley, PPO Elois Nelson, PPO Brandon Woods, PPO Roy McBride, PPO Steven Dukes, PPO Cobie Chauvin** and **PPO Wendy Sarner** for their commitment to the team. PPO Riley, Nelson, McBride, and Woods traveled from state to state to transport OJJ kids back to the state of Louisiana after flight from runaway status. Also, PPOs Chauvin, Dukes, and Sarner extended their support on their weekends to

travel by car to transport a youth back to Louisiana. So hats off to all of these officers who spent a significant amount of time away from their families and friends in dedication and hard work to go the extra mile. Y'all are greatly appreciated.

### Conference Attendance

In April **PPO Brandon Woods** and **PPO Roy McBride** attended an Anti-Gang Training Conference in New Orleans as a part of the Department of Justice Project Safe Neighborhood. The training is presented to improve knowledge, communication and collaboration involved in addressing the criminal gang issues affecting communities throughout the nation. They gave all of us the heads-up on anti-gang strategies.

### Welcome

Baton Rouge OJJ would like to welcome its two newest members to the family, **PPO Joshua McManus** and **PPO Andrew Bonner**. Welcome aboard!

### Firearms Requalification

In April Baton Rouge OJJ participated in firearms requalification. Thanks to **PPS Susan Miller**, our officers are qualified in the proper use of firearms. Congratulations BR-OJJ for an outstanding job.

### Congratulations to Employee of the Month

Baton Rouge OJJ would like to congratulate **SSC Jennifer Anderson, Employee of the Month** for the month of March. SSC Anderson is a great event planner, special project leader, listener and counselor. It doesn't matter if she is helping our kids, their families, the providers or our staff, Ms. Anderson gives her best and we are grateful for her. Kudos SSC Anderson!

## Administrative Professionals Day Celebrated

Baton Rouge OJJ would like to give a special thanks to **AC Irma Gonzalez**, **AA Christina Falcon** and **AA Gail Miller**. We are honored to have you and we thank you for all the hard work you do.

## Staff Attend Training Sessions

In April **RM Sue Larisey**, **PPS Michelle Thomas**, **Susan Miller**, **Joyce Watkins** and **Ricky Cannon** attended a Leadership Training for supervisors. Baton Rouge OJJ is happy to know that our strong leaders are continually expanding their leadership knowledge to not only produce the best working environment for us but also to train us how to be strong leaders for our kids.

## Alexandria Regional Office

In April **PPO3 Donna Desoto** was again the guest speaker for the Criminal Justice Department at LSUA. This is an on-going tradition for Donna as she continues to network with the university and to provide the students first hand information on OJJ and the reforms currently taking place. She was able to share with the students the different roles and responsibilities of a probation officer and the impact they are able to make on a young person's life. She also brought the class up-to-date on the reform effort, regionalization and the SAVRY.

**PPO3 Rodney McNeal** was guest speaker for the Renaissance Easter Program.

## Welcome

We are glad to welcome **PPO1 Jessica Howard**, who began work with us in April.

Several staff attended the Louisiana Juvenile Officer's Association held at the Best Western Convention Center in Alexandria in April. We are proud of **PPO3 Donna Desoto**, who

was elected District Representative, **PPO3 Lori Johnson**, who was voted 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of the LJOA and sworn in by Judge Koch. **PPO3 Rodney McNeal**, was elected Sergeant at Arms for the LJOA.



Relay for Life Cancer Survivors, from left, above, **Lisa Edwards**, **Medicaid Analyst**, **sister of PPO3 Lori Johnson**, **Adm. Coordinator 4 Sharon Graham** and **PPO3 Donna Desoto**, participated along with other family members at the Relay for Life event held in April in Alexandria. The three held the banner while walking the survivors' lap during the 12 hour marathon. Donna Desoto also participated in the karaoke, singing Patsy Cline's "Crazy" and was voted top five with much support from her co-workers. "Can you believe cake walk is still around with Donna and Sharon both winning cakes....."



*Springtime at Central Office*

**Recipe of the Month for May, 2010**  
**BCCY Culinary Arts and**  
**Occupations**  
**Chef Ronald J. Sonnier CEC**

The students of Culinary Arts and Occupations at Bridge City are always experimenting on new and exciting recipes that they would like to share with the staff of OJJ.

Since we are in the crawfish season and many are wondering how to prepare those wonderful Louisiana crawfish this month's focus is on just the perfect dish to show off your talents as a master in preparing a dish sure to please those family members and friends.

Among the many favorites of the students is this pasta dish. If you need a recipe or help with cooking ideas please feel free to contact Chef Sonnier at [ronald.sonnier@la.gov](mailto:ronald.sonnier@la.gov) and get just that special recipe to make your event or dinner super special.



*Chef Sonnier teaching a star pupil and aspiring chef.*

**Crawfish or Shrimp Pasta, ala Chef Sonnier**

1 cup	butter
2 cups	chopped onion
1 cup	chopped bell pepper
¾ cup	chopped celery
¾ cup	chopped fresh garlic
2 lbs.	crawfish tails or shrimp
1 pt.	heavy whipping cream
3 cups	sour cream
2 cups	pepper jack cheese
2 cups	grated Parmesan cheese
2 tbsp.	Tony's Seasoning
2-12 oz	tri-colored rotini, fettuccini or penne pasta
	Salt and pepper to taste if necessary

**Procedure:**

Boil pasta till it is al denté (offers a slight resistance when bitten into), drain and coat with a small amount of olive or vegetable oil. Melt butter in a large sauté pan and sauté all vegetables except garlic until they are translucent. Add garlic and Tony's seasoning.

Cook for about 2 minutes, then add the crawfish or shrimp, the heavy cream and the sour cream. Bring back up the heat and cook for about 4-5 minutes then add the remaining crawfish tails.

Add the Parmesan and Pepper Jack cheeses. Bring back up the heat and serve over the heated pasta or mix with pasta if you prefer a casserole type dish. (If mixing, top with extra pepper jack cheese for appetizing effect.)

# The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

## OJJ Administrative Team

Mary L. Livers, Ph.D, MSW, *Deputy Secretary*  
Girard J. Melancon, *Assistant Secretary*  
Alan M. Boxberger, *Undersecretary*  
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