
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Dear Colleagues:

I hope you have all had a good week. Staff at central office have been busy this week, preparing for budget meetings and the upcoming legislative session.

A number of meetings have taken place here this week. CO staff were trained in purchasing regulations, and national corrections expert Andie Moss of The Moss Group in Washington, DC, is here to meet with the executive staff on leadership issues for a retreat to be held in March for executive and senior level staff. While here, Andie provided guidance on our PREA (the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act) efforts. A very important PREA meeting is coming up in a couple of weeks where we will review the work product from PREA committee members.

Several staff members spent a significant amount of time trying to see if we could garner some funds from the proposed federal stimulus package. Unfortunately, nothing in the package will impact juvenile justice, but we hope that other state needs will be met.

I want to make you aware of another news item. JJPL and FFLIC are planning to hold a candlelight vigil in memory of Andy Naccio this Sunday at 6 p.m. at Jetson. A lot of OJJ staff knew Andy, who had been in our system for quite a while before his untimely and tragic death last Feb. 15. Andy, who was 20, died accidentally in the Jetson welding class, after he inhaled a substance used to lubricate drill bits. Andy was well-liked by both staff and youth and we at OJJ continue to mourn his passing. His death was a tragic event. Perhaps the best thing we can do is continue our resolve to always do the right thing for our youth.

You may see the news of the vigil in the media, and I wanted you to be aware of this ahead of time. Many of our staff experienced the tragic event, and seeing the news may cause them to relive the event and again experience the grief cycle. I ask that those of you who receive this message share it with appropriate staff to keep them from being caught by surprise by seeing news coverage of the vigil. While the vigil is not an OJJ-sanctioned event, we respect the right of the advocacy groups to express their respect for Andy.

I want you to know something about the heart and soul of OJJ staff. If you don't think we have great people at OJJ, think again. I am so proud of our staff throughout the agency. I'm particularly proud of the work the Jetson employees are doing. Even at this very stressful time, when staff are facing layoffs, they are still thinking of others. The Jetson staff has raised \$180.00 to be given to the family of MYSI consultant Reggie Collier, who recently passed away. BCCY has raised \$419, in addition to funds contributed by central office staff.

Wishing each of you a wonderful Valentine's Day – and my thanks to you for the great work you do every day to take care of our kids.

Sincerely,

“Doc”

Dr. Mary Livers

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