
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everybody:

This week has been pretty much the same as most weeks lately – meetings, meetings, meetings and more meetings. There's just so much going on. So many meetings and so little time, but necessary in order to get clear directions and understanding, to work out details...and then do it all over again. Some of the staff here at central office, as well as myself, continue to meet on the planned consolidation of staff. We have been busy meeting with DPS and Civil Service, and of course there are the budget issues that we are still working on.

Although I have been chained to the desk, at least I had a chance to go to Bridge City, which hosted a meeting and tour for newly elected District Attorneys, as well as some of the more seasoned DAs. Mark Steward from MYSI was there to work with the new DAs in understanding the Missouri Model and how it came about. All the guests were so impressed with the staff and the four youth ambassadors, who were extremely well-spoken and genuinely sincere in sharing their stories.

You know, each of the 11 District Attorneys who joined us for the program at BCCY have regular, fulltime, demanding public service jobs. My heartfelt thanks go out to each one of them, who interrupted their schedule, and traveled from around the state to come and learn firsthand what is going on in our secure care facilities. It's very reassuring to know that we have such engaged partners in this thing we call juvenile justice.

This week I got to see the DAs and judges. I was able to present at the judges' meeting in Lafayette, and we had a regular meeting with juvenile court judges as well. Both meetings with our judges were very informative and productive. I always learn a lot when I get to listen to our partners.

On Wednesday, I was also impressed with our larger community of stakeholders when Asst. Sec. Dr. Girard Melancon and I met with the MacArthur Foundation Models for Change grantees from around the state. There were 40-50 people in Baton Rouge from the MfC sites throughout Louisiana, and it is most gratifying to see so many dedicated people who are committed to sustaining our many accomplishments as a state. We were presented with data that shows the results of many of the initiatives supported by the MacArthur Foundation. Louisiana can indeed be proud of our accomplishments. We also spent time talking about ideas and next steps for the state as we continue down our forward-thinking path.

So I come back from my many meetings with big ideas. You know staff around here pretty much hate it when I go off to meetings like this, and come back with new ideas. That means additional "to-do" items on their lists. Secretly, I think they like it, at least they are not telling me otherwise.

Well, that about wraps it up for this week, except for today's get-togethers, such as our meeting with the judges. I appreciate them traveling on a Friday to meet here with us.

And, I appreciate the work that each and every one of you do, wherever you serve, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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