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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

This issue is coming to you from Raleigh, North Carolina. I'm attending the AWEC (Association of Women Executives in Corrections) meeting and annual training conference that started today, continues tomorrow and a half day Sunday. I will probably be back in the great state of Louisiana by the time most of you read this.

One of the duties that I have as part of my membership in the association, is serving as chairman of the National Voice Committee. This committee is charged with a number of things, and one of these responsibilities is to look at what is going on nationally within the field of corrections. Our committee had a very interesting discussion today, about what is happening nationwide, and it gave me pause to think about how much our agency has experienced many of these impacts due to the national economic situation. All government agencies all over the country are affected by economic realities. And we are all making adjustments to create the "new normal." Our world has changed, and will continue to change, demanding many more transformational changes. Our challenge is to continue to find creative, innovative and more effective ways to meet our mission. I want to thank all of our staff for "leaning forward" to make these transformational changes to our agency. Everything we do must matter.

With regard to Bridge City, there has been a lot of effort put into hiring new staff, and we are working hard to fill all the vacancies. I am very excited about the new team members. We appreciate the support from staff all over the agency, who came together to address the staff shortage. OJJ did it again; we showed what we are made of. We did what we needed to do to ensure that our mission is met. There is no doubt in my mind that we are up to it. The safety and rehabilitation of our youth is paramount. We are looking forward to that facility performing at the highest level and I am sure that all of you will continue to support that effort. All of us will continue to do whatever it takes to ensure that the therapeutic model is implemented with the utmost integrity.

I had two very good meetings this week, along with DAS Sean Hamilton and General Counsel Martha Morgan. We met with Orleans Parish Judges Tammy Stewart, Candice Bates Anderson and Tracey Flemings-Davillier. In addition, we met with Jefferson Parish Judges Andrea Janzen and Ann Murry Keller. The purpose was to update them on the progress at Bridge City and ask for their continued support as we strive to reinstate the integrity of the therapeutic model. I appreciate the judges taking time from their busy schedules to meet with us and I appreciate their continued support.

In my absence, DAS Karen Stubbs, Chief of Operations Elyn Toney and Director of Education Kim Mims attended the Joint Department Liaison meeting with the juvenile and family court judges today. The other agencies that attended were DCFS, DHH and Education. There was a full agenda in which each agency presented on interagency issues, accountability and outcomes for providers. Also discussed were new initiatives across all agencies, and the implications of the federal budget. Thanks to DHH for hosting the meeting.

I also attended a town hall meeting at Jetson this week, and I had the opportunity to speak directly with staff. That is always a good thing.

On another note, the television in my hotel room would not allow me to watch the LSU/Miss. State game last night, and I had to go downstairs to lobby to watch it. It was worth watching the Tigers trounce the Bulldogs.

I'll close with my thanks to each of every one of you, wherever you serve in the OJJ world, for all you do, every day, and especially for going above and beyond the call of ordinary duty, to meet the mission. Wishing you all a great weekend – I hope you can get outside and enjoy the good weather.

Sincerely,

"Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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