
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

This edition will be all about what's been consuming all of our time – yes, that's right, Old Man Isaac. Isaac has moved through the state like a grumpy old man. As you all know, preparation began last Sunday, and the decision was made to move the youth from Bridge City to Jetson. Central office staff spent Monday cleaning and preparing a dorm at Southern University to house the BCCY staff who would need a place to stay. The IS team escorted the buses from BCCY to Jetson, leaving literally at dawn on Monday. It was very well coordinated, and almost all of the JJS staff from Bridge City came with the youth. In addition, we had dorm managers, social services staff and administrative staff, all of them outstanding employees who stood by their commitment. Jetson staff rose to the occasion, and worked like crazy to make everything comfortable for their guests. Staff drove the buses down from Swanson, and a number of Swanson staff stayed on to help for several days. P&P staff came to Jetson and assisted in supervising kids in the infirmary. CCS staff stayed on and took good care of the medically needy youth. It's been hot, with the power off at Jetson for about 50 hours.

One Swanson employee is so dedicated that she rode all the way from Swanson to Jetson seated on a large can of green beans, because the bus was so loaded with supplies. The food service staff at Jetson kept the kids well fed with nutritious, hot food. BCCY **Director Namon Reid** and his leadership team have done an excellent job. Jetson **Acting Director Angela Sutton** led her staff in preparing to receive and care for a population that almost tripled the usual number. My thanks to the members of the executive team and central office staff who all performed their roles in a competent, top notch fashion to support the staff at all three facilities during this crisis. The Jetson and Bridge City staff – too numerous to mention – worked tirelessly to take care of kids. Every one of the regional managers deployed staff and vehicles as necessary and kept in touch constantly. **PPOs** all over the state were literally on the move, moving computer servers, moving vehicles to keep them out of floodwaters, and staffing shelters all over the state.

But it's not over yet. We are anxiously trying to find the right moment to move the Bridge City kids back, and we are going to do so as soon as it is safe and there is appropriate setting for them to return to. In the meantime the good news is that the electricity is back on at Jetson. Whew – that's a real relief.

I am always so proud of the OJJ team, and never more so when there's a crisis. You always step up, volunteer for extra duty, and just get the job done. This week you met the mission without a second thought, whether you were one of the folks out there working or you were standing by, waiting for the call to serve. (As the 17th century English poet and civil servant John Milton said, "they also serve who stand and wait.") **OJJ, you rock!** So, wishing you a wonderful, safe, dry weekend, with my gratitude, for all you do, whether the wind is blowing or it's calm, to meet the mission.

Sincerely,
"Doc"

Dr. Mary Livers

P.S. I know some of our staff have suffered storm damage to their homes from flooding and general hurricane issues. Please let me know who has been affected negatively by the storm. We stand by you all the way.

Mary L. Livers, MSW, PH.D, Deputy Secretary