
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

There's probably nothing I like to do better, workwise, than visit with staff in our offices and facilities, so let the traveling begin! This week began our P&P Week (really our P&P Month) recognition events in our field offices statewide. A state Senate resolution designated July 21-27 as Louisiana Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week, and of course OJJ always observes the American Probation and Parole Association's (APPA) Probation, Parole and Community Supervision Week, which was this week. So, to honor our PPOs, each of our offices is holding an event to recognize their contributions to public safety and the wellbeing of at-risk youth and their families. And barring anything unforeseen, I always get to attend and spend time with officers and staff at each of our offices. This week we have been to Hammond, Thibodaux and New Orleans, and I must say, we have had nice programs at each location. We are presenting service pins to employees with at least five years of state employment as a small token of their service. Facility and central office staff – don't worry-your pins will be presented to you at event at your location!

The weather was really nice, it almost felt like fall earlier this week, and then today, wow! We had enough rain that the southern part of the state is under a flash flood watch. A number of streets here were flooded this morning, and I suspect it was the same all over the state. So be careful as you travel around today and this weekend – flooded roadways are no joke. The morning news said the entire state was getting rain and more was on the way from Texas. I can think of a lot of good things to import from Texas but rain is not one of them. They can keep the precipitation, they need it more than we do.

Well, the World Cup is over for four more years - congratulations to Germany! Next up, are you ready for some football? We may have to surf the channels to find something good this weekend, if this rain continues.

I'd be remiss if I did not ask you all to keep the passengers of the Malaysian Airlines jet that was shot down, and their families, in your thoughts and prayers. What a tragedy – innocent people are often literally caught in the crossfire of international conflicts. The world is in a crazy place right now. Let's do our part to keep the peace here at home.

One of our strengths as an agency is that our staff here at OJJ is always willing to go above and beyond when dealing with difficult situations. I consistently hear that from our partners. That's a great quality for staff to have. You probably heard about the world's worst customer service call when a customer called Comcast last week, and the service representative argued with the now-former customer. We don't have that kind of culture in OJJ – when nobody else will step up and take care of an issue, OJJ staff are willing to go the extra mile and do whatever it takes to take care of our families. Saying no is often the easiest thing to do, or people may work at finding a way to not do something. So many times, with just a little effort we can find ways to accomplish something rather than not helping out and accomplishing it. It's a great comment about our staff, and a tribute to each of you – that you take the high road to try to work through conflicting issues. Oftentimes things require more than just a yes or no answer. Being a public servant (and we ARE in the service of the public) sometimes means doing our best to accommodate people's real needs and work through difficult situations. Of course, we do that with our mission being the number one consideration.

With all that, I'll close with my sincere thanks to each member of the OJJ family, in every office and facility, for all you do every day and everywhere, to meet the mission, foster public safety, and keep the peace.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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