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# what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

YEA! Swanson-Monroe and Columbia were found 100 percent on 38 mandatory standards by a team of ACA auditors this week. They also found the facility to be 99 percent compliant on 329 non-mandatory standards. That's a LOT of standards, which cover all operations and environmental factors of the facility. We still have to appear before the ACA Commission on Accreditation for Corrections, which will make the final award of reaccreditation at the annual conference in January. But I'm not too worried, I'm quite sure we will be re-accredited for three more years.

I want to extend thanks and congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to achieve this accomplishment, because the truth is, re-accreditation is harder to achieve than the initial accreditation. The first time, we have to show compliance for one year. On repeat audits facilities have to show they have maintained consistent operations in line with the standards for three years since the first audit, which is not necessarily easy. My heartfelt thanks to RD Carolyn Lewis and everyone on her team – Dir. Vickie Shoecraft, Columbia Dep. Dir. Kim Rushing, Dep. Dir. Basil Richards, Asst. Dir. Eric Washington, SCY ACA Manager Violet Lee, our overall ACA Accreditation Manager Angela Arabie, who quarterbacked our audit preparations, and every member of the Swanson staff, the youth, and all the central office staff who pitched in to assist. This is nothing short of a team effort, and there is a lot of behind-the-scenes activity that goes on before the auditors arrive.

I want to share a comment from one of the ACA auditors to Angela Arabie: "I thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone that is a part of the Swanson team. I am grateful my first audit could be with such a warm and open group. It was my pleasure to communicate to the team and staff what I saw as hard work and commitment on the part of all involved." Good job everyone - you are not only true professionals, but you naturally extend Louisiana hospitality to guests, and it shows.

Asst. Secretary Sean Hamilton also congratulates the entire Swanson Monroe and Columbia team on another successful audit. "My thanks to all at Swanson for continuing to meet the mission," he said. "Your hard work validates our commitment to maintaining a high degree of excellence in all our operations, as well as treatment and operational fidelity. We are so proud of you for continuing to meet nationally recognized juvenile justice standards."

We continued our statewide travels to attend P&P Week recognition events. This week we visited Alexandria, Lake Charles, Lafayette and Baton Rouge. Every program we have attended has been very nice, with a lot of participation by our partners in the courts and other stakeholders, who have attended to recognize the efforts of our PPOs. I've been trying to resist all the treats that are served, but I find that I'm getting weaker in that regard with every program. I'm enjoying seeing everyone and letting you all know how much you are appreciated for meeting the mission every day. We looking to visiting Monroe and Tallulah next week, and Natchitoches and Shreveport a little later. I know I can speak for Asst. Sec. Sean Hamilton as well as myself – we're enjoying the time we have been able to spend with the staff in all the regional offices. We know how busy everyone is, and we are glad that they can take the time to spend with us. Especially since all the regional offices are helping to prepare for the P&P ACA audit that starts Monday. The P&P Field Office unit has been ACA accredited for many years, and has led the agency in accreditation for a very long time.

I'll wrap it up for this week, with my sincere thanks to everyone - EVERYONE – in the OJJ family – for all that you do, consistently day in and day out, to meet the mission.

Sincerely, "Doc" *Dr. Mary Livers*

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