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First Lady Laura Bush comes to Hershey to honor former Pennsylvania First Lady Michele Ridge



Michele Ridge
Pennsylvania's former First Lady

First Lady Laura Bush joined Pennsylvania First Lady Kathy Schweiker at the annual Pennsylvania Communities That Care Conference at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey, to pay tribute to Michele Ridge, former First Lady of Pennsylvania, for her tireless dedication to improving children's lives and reducing youth violence.

"Michele is a leader and a woman of great heart who brings out the best in people," Laura Bush said. "She's devoted to helping children who cannot help or protect themselves, and she wants to make sure that every child has a fair chance at the best possible future."

"Michele, President Bush joins me in recognizing you for your service to the people of Pennsylvania and to the people of America," Mrs. Bush continued. "You're an inspiration and a good friend."

The event, which was hosted by the Governor's Community Partnership for Safe Children (Children's Partnership), was part of a gathering of more than 600 violence-prevention practitioners from across Pennsylvania. It was the highlight of the annual Pennsylvania Communities That Care conference, in which CTC sites from throughout the state celebrated Mrs. Ridge's accomplishments in preventing youth violence, delinquency, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and school dropout.

In addition to First Lady Laura Bush, Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge was also in attendance to praise his wife's contributions to Pennsylvania's children. A personal letter from actor/director Rob Reiner, president of the I Am Your Child Foundation, was read to Mrs. Ridge, followed by a video presentation including various federal and state figures paying tribute to her. The former First Lady was also presented with a scrapbook on behalf of all of Pennsylvania's CTC sites.

Mrs. Ridge, currently the national Communities That Care spokesperson for the Channing Bete Company, chaired the Children's Partnership from 1995 to 2001. Under her leadership, the Children's Partnership sought to curb youth violence by *First Ladies, cont'd. on page 2*

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reducing child abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, academic failure, illiteracy, and other risk factors that make children more likely to commit crimes. Communities That Care, the cornerstone of the Children's Partnership, is now being used in 128 sites in 58 Pennsylvania counties.

The Communities That Care Conference also included an Annual Awards Luncheon, honoring individuals and communities for outstanding contributions over the past year. Winners and photographs will be featured in next month's Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice newsletter.

Communities That Care is a prevention planning process that provides assessment, training, and consulting services to help communities develop an integrated approach to positive youth development and the prevention of problem behaviors. Grounded in extensive, rigorous prevention-science research, Communities That Care was developed in 1987 by Dr. J. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard F. Catalano, professors of social work at the University of Washington, directors of the Social Development Research Group, and development partners at the Channing Bete Company. Communities That Care is currently used in more than 400 communities across the nation.

This publication is produced monthly at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research at Shippensburg University.

Guest articles are always welcome; please submit them by email or on a disk. We particularly enjoy your photographs, but we ask that these be mailed - we will be happy to return them to you.

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Intensive Aftercare Probation Forum held April 4-5

The first Intensive-Aftercare Probation Forum, sponsored by the Juvenile Court Judges Commission, was held in State College April 4-5. Thirty-five intensive probation and aftercare probation officers from across Pennsylvania met in a 1½-day forum to discuss their intensive probation and aftercare programs.

The workshop participants had the opportunity to share information about their programs and define obstacles in developing and maintaining successful intensive probation and aftercare programs. JCJC staff provided presentations on the history of intensive probation and aftercare, substance abuse, and officer safety.

Intensive probation officers and aftercare probation officers were separated into two smaller groups during which the JCJC Intensive Probation and Aftercare standards were reviewed. Participants also discussed the positive features of their respective intensive probation and aftercare programs, as well as the impediments to operating a successful program.

Although the overall perception toward both intensive probation and aftercare services was positive, several obstacles in developing and maintaining effective programs emerged. Of primary concern was the lack of available mental health services, both residential and community based. Another obstacle mentioned was the increasing amount of paperwork that is required of the probation officers. Other issues mentioned were difficulty in collecting restitution and lack of parental involvement.

It is anticipated that a subsequent forum will be conducted next spring, which will be planned in conjunction with a committee comprised of intensive probation and aftercare probation officers.

Franklin County Juvenile Probation Helps Appalachian Trail Club With Trail and Building Maintenance

by Heather Evans, BARJ Coordinator

Beginning April 13, 2002, Franklin County Juvenile Probation youth will be spending time on the Appalachian Trail. On that day, six youth in the Youth Diversion Program and three supervising probation officers will be helping with a general spring clean-up around the Gypsy Spring Cabin in northeastern Franklin County. On May 4, these same youth will be joining the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club's (PATC) North Chapter on their monthly work trip in the area of Milesburn Cabin, near the Franklin-Cumberland County line. Both cabins and the Pennsylvania section of the Appalachian Trail are located in Michaux State Forest.

The North Chapter of the PATC maintains 70 miles of the Appalachian Trail from the Potomac River near Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, to Pine Grove Furnace in Pennsylvania. They also maintain 36 miles of AT side trails, the 36-mile Catoctin Trail in Maryland, and the 110-mile northern section of the Tuscarora Trail. The North Chapter also maintains a number of cabins and shelters, many of which are available for the public to rent. The club is staffed by volunteers from central and north central Maryland as well as from south central Pennsylvania. These volunteers participate in a work trip the first weekend of every month except December, and have logged countless hours helping to protect the environment and make the trail beautiful for all to enjoy.

Tyler Somerville, Regional Supervisor for Cabins Operations for PATC, is eagerly anticipating the opportunity to teach the probation youth new skills. Somerville spends much of his free time helping youth in one way or another and feels that if even one of the probation youth wants to come back out to work on the trails again during his or her free time, "then I've accomplished something." Peter Brown, the North Chapter's president and the Regional Supervisor for Trails Operations, is also looking forward to working with the probation office in this effort.

Washington County School-based Probation Officer Michael Porter is a Hero

by David Scrip Jr., Washington County JPO

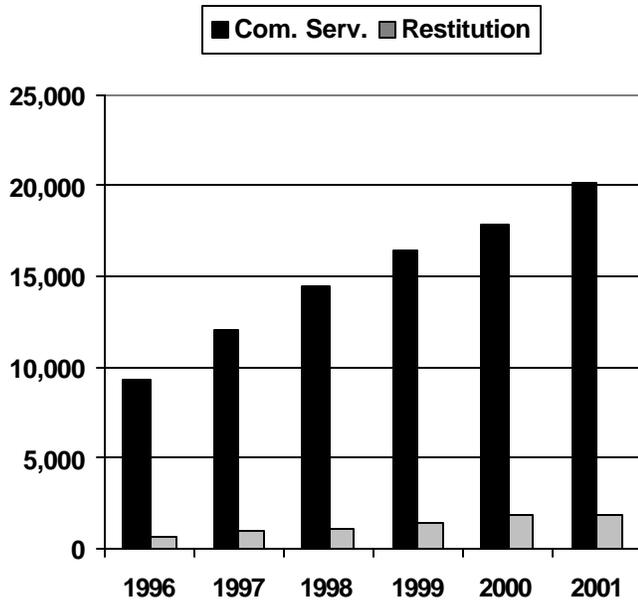
On March 11, 2002, at about 9:00 in the morning, two students ran into the main office of Washington High School yelling that there was an apartment building on fire across the street and someone needed to call 911. School-based probation officer Michael Porter, who was sitting in the main office administering daily detentions, instructed the school secretary to call 911 and then left the building.

The Washington City Fire Department had not yet arrived at the building about 80 yards away. Porter ran across the street to the 11-unit apartment building, noticing that fire was shooting out of the second floor windows. A man who was holding open the door to the apartment which was on fire told Porter there was a woman stuck inside who was too heavy for him to lift. Porter ran into the building and found an elderly woman unconscious at the top of the stairs. He carried her down the stairs and out of the building.

Students who were observing the incident from the classrooms cheered Porter's heroic actions. A neighbor beckoned Porter to bring the injured woman to her house. Porter then returned to the burning building and assisted another man in knocking on the remaining doors of the apartment building. When the Washington City Fire Department and Ambulance arrived, Porter alerted the EMTs to the woman's condition and returned to the school. The 66-year-old woman was taken to Washington Hospital by ambulance, then flown to the Western Pennsylvania Hospital in Pittsburgh.

Porter has been a Washington County Juvenile Probation Officer for two years, and a school-based probation officer at Washington High School since August, 2001. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, where he lettered in wrestling, he lives with his wife, Tommy Lyn, and two daughters, Madison, age 3 and Sadie, age 8 months.

2001 Community Service/Restitution Program Statistics



As continuing county efforts are directed at more fully integrating practices consistent with the Balanced and Restorative Justice principles the number of youth participating in community service and restitution programs again increased to record levels in 2001. Aggregate community service and restitution program data is compiled each year from the information submitted to the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research. The information gathered is necessary for purposes related to the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission sponsored insurance program, and also serves to provide a useful picture of the community service and financial restitution program activities statewide.

During 2001 there were a total of 20,209 youth assigned unpaid community service in the 69 active programs throughout the Commonwealth. This represents an increase of 13.2 percent, from 17,857 youth participating in 2000. To gain perspective over a broader period of time, this is a 407 percent increase from the 4,964 youth participating in 1992, just nine years ago. Last year, a total of 734,395 community service hours were worked by youth throughout the State. At the current minimum wage, this represents more than \$3,782,000 in volunteer effort invested in non-profit organizations and agencies across the Commonwealth in 2001. There were 12 programs handling more than 500 community service participants last year including: Philadelphia 1,688(+6%); Allegheny (Cornell-Abraxas Workbridge) 1,547(+27%);

Montgomery 1,352 (+28%); Bucks 1,341 (+11%); Delaware 1,262 (+61%); Berks 1,097 (-11%); Lancaster 870 (-1%); Erie 729 (+7%); York 699(+13%); Lehigh 614 (+27%); Dauphin 588 (-14%); and Chester 558 (+34%). The percentage figures listed above in parentheses indicate the increase or decrease from the number of participants in 2000 in each county.

Approximately 78 percent of the total youth assigned were male. The average age of participants in the majority of the programs was between 15 and 16 years of age. Both the age range and male/female composition of program participants has remained relatively constant since 1990. The length of time necessary to complete community service assignments appeared similar to prior years in that there are significant variations between programs ranging from low figures of 7 and 30 days in some of the counties' programs, to highs of 180 to 270 days in several counties. Also, the percentage of youth carried over to the following year to complete their assignment continued to be high at 9,963, or 49.2 percent.

There were a total of 1,842 youth involved in one of the 26 active financial restitution programs in the State. This is a decrease of three programs from 2000. The number of program participants still increased 6 percent from the 2000 total of 1,735. The largest of these programs operating in 2001 are Allegheny (Cornell-Abraxas Workbridge) 416, Philadelphia (Cornell- Abraxas Workbridge) 241, Bucks County 207, Berks County 184, and York County with 103 youth.

