

a newsletter of the

Pennsylvania
Juvenile Court
Judges'
Commission

PENNSYLVANIA JUVENILE JUSTICE

Volume 10, Number 5

www.jcjc.state.pa.us

May 2002

JCJC Weekend Masters Degree Program at Shippensburg University Graduates Class of 2002

Debbie Belan
Andrew Benner
Becky Brant
William Cooney
David Daniels
Rob Davis
Hampton Strosnider
John Johnson
Dianna McMillan
Matthew Minnier
Joy Moore
Karen Slater
Brian Steuhl
Marc Wells
Matthew Yonkin

This year's graduates comprise the 18th class to graduate from the Weekend Masters Degree Program, bringing the total number of graduates from the program to 376.



Congratulations go out to the class of 2002 in the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission-sponsored Weekend Masters Degree Program at Shippensburg University. Commencement ceremonies were held at the University on Saturday, May 11, 2002. The 15 members of this year's class are (seated, left to right) Becky Brant (York County), Dianna McMillan (Philadelphia County), William Cooney (Philadelphia County), Karen Slater (Westmoreland County), Debbie Belan (Beaver County), and standing (left to right) are Joy Moore (Allegheny County), Rob Davis (Tioga County), Brian Steuhl (Pike County), Hampton Strosnider (Franklin County), Matthew Yonkin (Lycoming County), Marc Wells (Allegheny County), Andrew Benner (Cumberland County), David Daniels (Delaware County), John Johnson (Luzerne County), and Matthew Minnier (Lycoming County).

Our current graduates have completed a very demanding academic program while achieving outstanding grades. In addition to completing challenging classes, each class member completed a six-credit practicum. It has been a pleasure working with them and on behalf of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission and faculty at Shippensburg University we offer them congratulations on an outstanding achievement and wish them the very best in future endeavors.

Mark Your Calendar!

The Spirit of Justice 2002

Restorative Community Justice
Conference

September 17-19, 2002

Keystone, Colorado

Join us to experience, explore, and engage in the
"Spirit of Justice"

3 days of in-depth learning about Restorative
Community Justice
Gain practical tools & insights
for your community

Who Should Attend

The legal community, criminal justice practitioners, community members, government officials, the faith community, victim services and human service providers, school officials, mental health professionals, youth groups, nonprofit organizations serving communities, law enforcement & community-building organizations.

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.

P.J. Verrecchia is the editor. The address is CJJT&R, Shippensburg University, 1871 Old Main Drive, Shippensburg, PA 17257-2299 or email pjverr@wharf.ship.edu

Please send additions or changes to the mailing list to Nina Weaver at the same address or email nsweav@wharf.ship.edu

Juvenile Justice Scholarship Fund at Shippensburg University

The Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research and the Shippensburg University Foundation established a scholarship program in 1986 to benefit undergraduate Criminal Justice students at Shippensburg University. From 1986 through 2000, more than \$12,000 in scholarship funds have been provided by graduates and friends of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission-sponsored Weekend Masters Degree Program at Shippensburg University. The money has been used to present a \$1,000 award in the form of tuition support to a worthy undergraduate student majoring in criminal justice with an interest in juvenile justice.

The Center plans to make a similar award in 2003. As usual, we are relying on graduates of the Weekend Masters Degree Program for their support. However, donations from any person in the Commonwealth's juvenile justice system will be gratefully accepted.

Past recipients of this scholarship have gone on to careers in Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system. Jermaine Fox and Kassi Morgart, Dauphin County Juvenile Probation Officers, and Michelle Geib, who works for Perry County Juvenile Probation, are just three people who have benefited from this scholarship. Geib is also a graduate of the Weekend Program, and Fox is scheduled to begin classes in the Weekend Program this September.

The fact that past award winners have served or are currently serving as juvenile justice professionals in Pennsylvania attests to the value of the scholarship program. If you would like to contribute to the 2001 scholarship fund, please make your check payable to the SU Foundation/Juvenile Justice Scholarship and mail it to:
Shippensburg University Foundation
Shippensburg University
1871 Old Main Drive
Shippensburg PA 17257.

Research Review: The Questionable Advantage of Defense Counsel in Juvenile Court

by George W. Burruss, Jr. and Kimberly Kempf-Leonard.

In their study, Burruss and Kempf-Leonard researched the issue of legal representation in serious juvenile delinquency matters. They examined juvenile court outcomes in Missouri in 1998 to determine the adequacy of legal representation as evident in more lenient case outcomes.

In Missouri, attorneys reported that they least like to work in the area of juvenile law. Only a fraction of the lawyers interviewed had experience in this area, and those who did worked primarily in adoption or dependency cases. Burruss and Kempf-Leonard stated that in a “changing climate of juvenile law and court procedures...legal representation for youths is a major concern” (p. 37).

Burruss and Kempf-Leonard collected 1998 data in three juvenile courts (one in an urban setting, one in a suburban setting, and one in a rural setting) with various caseloads and procedures. They obtained data from case files for a random sample of 17 percent of all felony referrals to the urban court (n=162), suburban court (n=303), and rural court (n=126). Data was restricted to felony cases because of a greater likelihood that juveniles would have legal representation in serious matters. Excluding cases that were not processed (rejected outright, transferred to another juvenile court, or certified to adult court), there were a total of 469 cases examined (86 in the urban court, 269 in the suburban court, and 114 in the rural court).

Legal representation varied, with 73 percent of the urban cases having a lawyer, while 25 percent of the suburban cases and 15 percent of the rural cases had representation. Of the cases in the urban court, 72 percent had a public defender. Private counsel represented 21 percent of the cases in the suburban court, and in the rural court the attorneys were evenly divided between public defenders and private counsel.

In their findings, Burruss and Kempf-Leonard discovered that out-of-home placement was “more likely to occur if a youth had an attorney, even when other relevant legal and individual factors were the same” (p. 60). Each of the courts examined showed this adverse effect. Based on their findings, Burruss and Kempf-Leonard offer several

recommendations for issues and possible policy action.

Their first recommendation involves attorneys’ competence in regards to juvenile court. “Juvenile law and the unique philosophy of juvenile courts are rarely components of routine law school training and are certainly not required courses” (p. 61). Burruss and Kempf-Leonard also noted that resources allocated to juvenile courts “always appear secondary relative to courts that handle adults,” and that “efforts need to be devoted to communicating the vital role of juvenile courts and their success” (p. 61).

Burruss and Kempf-Leonard also suggest taking a look at the organizational climate within the juvenile court. They believe that, in some instances, juveniles are assigned representation too late in the process. Also, adjudication and disposition hearings should be made truly bifurcated processes. Giving each hearing a distinct objective would enable legal counsel or special advocates to assist youths in a much clearer manner.

Burruss and Kempf-Leonard suggest considering what it means to be an advocate for youths involved in a juvenile court hearing. They cite that “since support is strong” for guardian ad litem and court appointed special advocates (CASA), these volunteers could play a role in helping attorneys clarify their roles in cases involving serious allegations of delinquency.

While Burruss and Kempf-Leonard realize that there are times when a juvenile being placed outside of his/her home is the best thing for that juvenile, they nonetheless state that, in the spirit of the *Gault* decision in 1967, juveniles deserve all of the legal protections that are afforded to adult offenders.

Note: This research article was published in the March 2002 edition of *Justice Quarterly*, a publication of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

J.U.S.T.I.C.E. Festival scheduled in Beaver County

by: Debra J. Fencil, Beaver County Juvenile Court Services

Beaver County is on the cutting edge when it comes to Balanced and Restorative Justice community service events. On August 24, 2002, we will be hosting our first J.U.S.T.I.C.E. (Juveniles United and Standing Together Increasing Community Efforts) Festival. The Goals and objectives are to implement Balanced and Restorative Justice practices in Beaver County by bringing together clients, criminal justice professionals, school personnel, victims, and the community in a fun-filled event that ultimately benefits charity, while creating a great atmosphere for meaningful community service to be performed. The J.U.S.T.I.C.E. Festival is being sponsored by the Juvenile Crime Enforcement Coalition and the Beaver County Family and Community Resource Network.

Direct juvenile involvement includes fund raising, preparation, advertising, "building" booths with donated lumber, setting up the stage for the talent show, setting up each booth, deciding on types of events, participation in the talent show, art exhibition and essay contest, food preparation, ticket sales, clean-up, and more. Scheduled events/booths include a "dunk tank" to dunk your favorite criminal justice professional, a silent auction (all items were donated by generous community vendors), face painting, balloon toss, nickle pitch, duck pond, space walk, crafts made by clients, shaved ice, popcorn, sandwiches, and more. All proceeds go to the Valentines Dream Fund/Festival of Trees and a second charity to be selected by the clients themselves, via secret ballot.

We are very excited about this event and hope to enhance it yearly. The festival will be held at Irvine Park, Beaver, Pennsylvania, on August 24, 2002, from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. We hope to see you there. For more information, please contact Debra J. Fencil at 724-774-8870 or dfencil@co.beaver.pa.us

Staff Development News

As we near the close of the current fiscal year and staff and supervisors begin planning for training needs for the new fiscal year, we wanted to take this opportunity to remind you of three workshops that are part of the Center's Spring/Summer series of professional development offerings that still have space available. The "Drug Subculture Competency" program scheduled for August 7-8, to be led by Bruce Schaffer at the Holiday Inn East in Harrisburg still has limited space.

Other programs with space available include:

- A 1½-day workshop titled "Interventions for Adolescent Female Offenders" will be held July 18-19, at the Days Inn Penn State. This program will provide participants the opportunity to become more effective at dealing with one of the most difficult and least understood populations facing today's juvenile justice professional. The session will be led by John P. Seasock, a Specialist/Consultant with Renaissance Psychological and Counseling Corporation, which is highly recognized for program development and the treatment of chronic, high-risk mental health and forensic populations. He holds two master's degrees in counseling/psychology, is currently a psychological Doctoral Candidate and holds multiple certifications in various psychotherapeutic interventions.
- "Understanding Adolescents: A Juvenile Court Training Curriculum," will be held July 25-26 at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg East. This 1½-day workshop will present modules from the newly published ABA curriculum that was specifically designed for juvenile court professionals, to teach how to apply knowledge of adolescent development to practice issues. The first part of the session, entitled "The Pathways to Youth Violence," focuses on the developmental dynamics of violent offending. The second segment, "Talking to Teens in the Justice System," teaches techniques for successfully interviewing adolescents involved in the court system. Both portions of the workshop will be led by James L. Loving, Jr., Ph.D., a clinical and forensic psychologist at Assessment and Treatment Alternatives in Philadelphia.

Further details on these programs can be found on pages 25-26 of the spring training booklet. Staff may register by fax 717-477-1236 or by calling John Herb at 717-477-1185.

Synopsis of MAYSI ~ 2 Data

by: Nichole Remsberg, JDCAP

The Juvenile Detention Centers' Association of Pennsylvania (JDCAP) was selected in 1999 by the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) to be funded for an 18-month grant, the Mental Health Assessment of Youth in Detention. The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee (JJDCP), formerly the JAC, and JDCAP selected the Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument to be the tool piloted. The project began in January, 2000. Since that time, JDCAP was awarded a second phase of the project that will conclude in December of 2002.

The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument-2 (MAYSI-2) is a screening instrument designed to assist juvenile justice facilities in identifying youths ages 12-17 who may have mental health needs. The MAYSI-2 screens for a range of mental or emotional disturbances and problem behaviors, including alcohol/drug use, suicide risk, and short-term risk of aggression, and uses youths self-report.

Between April, 2000 and September, 2001, approximately 9,954 cases were processed through 12 juvenile detention centers participating in the pilot phase of the JDCAP study. These youths ranged in age from 10 to 22 years, with an average age of 15.7. The majority of the youths are male (82 percent) and are fairly split between white (40 percent) and African-American (48 percent) ethnic groups. Analyses determined that white male youths are more likely to present with mental health symptoms than African-American youths, with White male youths scoring in the caution range significantly more often than African American male youths. This trend of racial differences, however, was not as consistent for female youths. Hispanic female youths scored highest on all scales except for alcohol and drug use and somatic complaints, in which White female youth scored highest. The results should be read with caution, however, as the numbers for the Hispanic female category are still rather low. In general, however, females are significantly higher than males on each of the MAYSI~2 subscales except alcohol and drug use, where there is no significant difference between the groups. Most youths (81percent) were administered the MAYSI~2 within 24 - 48 hours of their arrival to the detention facility. However, some youths were given the MAYSI~2 very early in their stay (6 percent within the first few hours) and some much later in their stay (13 percent more

than 48 hours).

JDCAP moved into full data collection in August, 2001, with the installation of the MAYSI~2 Voice CD in the detention facilities. Between August and December, 2001, approximately 3,000 cases have been entered into the project dataset. These youths range in age from 10 to 21 years, with an average age of 15.7. The majority are male (81 percent), and once again fairly split between white (41 percent) and African American (46 percent) ethnic groups. Hispanic youth now make up 10 percent of the sample. The ethnic and gender trends outlined for the pilot dataset still hold. Interestingly, during this phase of the study more youth are being administered the mental health screen earlier in their stay (i.e., earlier than the 24-48 hour benchmark recommended by the developers of the MAYSI~2). Almost one-third of the sample (28 percent) are being administered the instrument within a few hours of their arrival at a facility. Administrations for the earliest admission category ("A Few Hours") are up 22 percent from the pilot dataset. Finally, a new feature of the MAYSI~2 Voice CD is the ability to track youth over multiple visits. While we are still in the early stages of these analyses given the relatively low numbers of the new dataset, we are seeing a trend of scores either remaining constant or increasing over subsequent visits, and very few youths (fewer than five percent) are producing lower scores on the subscales.

Franklin Named Chief in Sullivan County

On April 29, 2002, Kelly Franklin was named Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in Sullivan County. Franklin holds a B.S. in Criminal Justice Administration from Mansfield University. She is a 1999 graduate of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission-sponsored Weekend Masters Degree Program at Shippensburg University.

Franklin worked as a juvenile probation officer in Bradford County for six-and-a-half years before taking a position as Court Liaison with Cornell Abraxas. She worked for Cornell Abraxas for less than two years before accepting the Chief's job in Sullivan County. Originally from Bradford County, Franklin now lives in Laporte.



Remember this Date!

The Crime Victims Act and Its Implementation in the Juvenile Court System

June 18, 2002

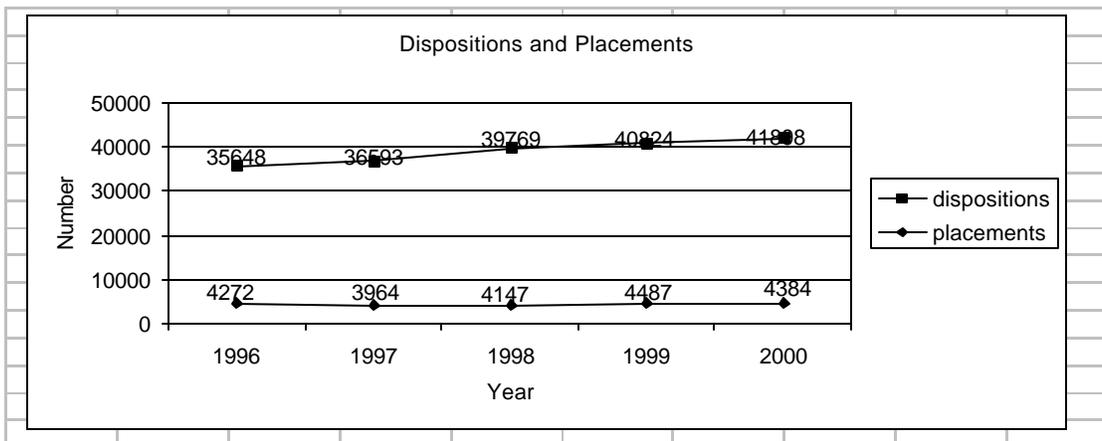
The Days Inn Penn State — State College, PA

If you have questions or need more information, please contact

Billie Jo Hack
724-351-5665

or

Aleshia Hough
724-482-9220



Summary of Dispositions and Placements

The graph displayed above shows the five-year trends for dispositions and placements; reviews are not included in this data. Dispositions have increased 17.8 percent from 1996 to 2000, while placements have only increased 2.6 percent during the same time period. In 1996, placements accounted for 12 percent of the total dispositions. In 2000, placements only accounted for 10.5 percent of the total. More detailed information can be found in the *Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Dispositions 2000* report, available from Lanette Hutchison at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research's Information Technology Division, 717-477-1488.

