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Tioga County's SPOKE is on the "cutting edge" of youth accountability

by Dave Stager, Tioga County Chief
Juvenile Probation Officer

In November of 1997 Tioga County received startup grant monies for a program encompassing the principles of Balanced and Restorative Justice. This program was called "SPOKE" (Specialized Programs Offering Kids Encouragement). The program was designed around the department's community service program but was expanded to include income-generating activities to allow for victim restitution payments.

A firewood-cutting business seemed logical—there is a ready supply of trees and local gas bills were rising. The program was designed to provide a work experience for all youth coming through the Tioga County court system by having all referrals complete 50 hours of community service. Additional work hours are added for probation violations and sanctions in lieu of revocation processing. The work hours are scheduled when the youth are out of school, thus taking up some of the youths' free time.

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The Spirit of Justice

2002

Restorative Community Justice Conference

September 17 - 19, 2002
Keystone, Colorado

Sponsored by
The Colorado Forum on
Community & Restorative Justice

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Denver, CO 80204
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www.coloradorestorativejustice.org

Weekend Masters Degree program applications for Shippensburg University Class of 2005 being ac- cepted

Applications are now being accepted for the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission-sponsored Weekend Masters Degree program at Shippensburg University. Members of the class of 2005 will begin classes in the fall of 2003.

The Shippensburg University program offers students a Master of Science degree in the Administration of Justice, with a concentration in Juvenile Justice. This is a 36-credit hour program that includes courses in research methods, theory, administration, and policy analysis. Also featured is a summer internship where students will get an opportunity to develop, implement, and evaluate a program in their home county, or evaluate an existing program that serves juvenile offenders. Classes in this two- (2) year program are scheduled every third weekend in the fall, spring, and summer, with no classes scheduled in the months of July and August. This program is open to county juvenile probation officers who will have at least two (2) years of post-baccalaureate experience in the juvenile justice field prior to the start of classes. Applicants who have an undergraduate grade point average of less than 2.75 must take and pass the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) or the GRE.

The deadline for applying to the JCJC-sponsored MSAJ program class of 2005 at Shippensburg University is September 1, 2002.

Tuition costs, educational fees, and room and board are paid for by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission for all eligible students. If you would like more details or are interested in applying for the program, please call PJ Verrecchia at 717-477-1797, go to the JCJC web site www.jcjc.state.pa.us, or send an email to pjverr@wharf.ship.edu.

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

JCJC sponsors second Community-Based Probation Forum

The second Community-Based Probation Services Forum, sponsored by the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, served to bring together 44 community-based probation officers, supervisors, and chief juvenile probation officers in a 1½ day forum to discuss their community-based probation programs.

The workshop participants had the opportunity to share information about their programs through a round robin format. Sherry Lupton, supervisor for Lancaster County Juvenile Probation, and Linda Butts, Youth Aid Panel Coordinator for Lancaster County, led an introductory training session and discussion on engaging the community. The Pennsylvania Balanced and Restorative Justice video was reviewed with many positive comments.

The participants of the first CBPO forum requested additional information on public relations and working with the media. The second day of this forum was devoted to an informative presentation on public- and media relations by Alison Delsite, Press Secretary for the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency, and Andrew DeAngelo, the deputy chief from Lehigh County Juvenile Probation. Numerous tools and media tips were offered. The participants also had the opportunity to practice their skills by drafting mock press releases.

A discussion on improving the community-based probation officer forums resulted in many positive comments regarding the advantages of convening this group of specialized probation officers. Several suggestions were made for future sessions, which include:

- Schedule one forum per year for a 2½ day time period.
- Request that the participants bring copies of program descriptions and other helpful information for the purpose of sharing with the group.
- Develop a resource directory of community based probation officers.
- Provide practice simulations for such processes as youth aid panels and restorative group conferencing.

A planning committee comprised of community-based probation officers will meet to frame the next forum. Volunteers for this planning group are Susi Goss, Venango County; Jason Viola, Montgomery County; Sherry Lupton and Linda Butts, Lancaster County; and Heather Evans, Franklin County.

A subsequent forum will be scheduled for the upcoming fall /winter 2002 training schedule to be offered through the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research. Thanks to the participants and the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, this training served to bring together those officers whose responsibilities include the development and enhancement of this specialized model for juvenile probation supervi-

Governor Schweiker signs FY '02-'03 budget

On June 29, 2002 Governor Mark Schweiker signed the Commonwealth's FY '02-'03 budget that previously had been passed by the General Assembly. The Budget provides funds to support Specialized Probation Services (SPS) at the FY '01-'02 level of \$15,623,000. This appropriation supports school-based, intensive, aftercare, and community-based probation services provided pursuant to JCJC Standards. Also, the regular grant-in-aid appropriation continues at the previous fiscal year funding of \$6,033,000. This appropriation supports salaries for probation officers, training and graduate education programs for probation officers, and other statewide impact projects. The FY '02-'03 budget continues the TANFBG appropriation at \$2,000,000.

The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission has approved \$4,476,900 of the JCJC's FY '02-'03 Grant-in-Aid Appropriation for General Probation Services and \$15,607,394 of the JCJC's FY '02-'03 Grant-in-Aid Appropriation for Specialized Probation Services.

Also, the Commission has authorized the use of the five year average of informal adjustment, consent decree, and probation dispositions in each jurisdiction from 1996-2000 to determine FY '02-'03 TANFBG allocations to counties. Distribution of these funds will be made on the basis of eligible dispositions occurring in counties during 7/1/02 – 6/30/03.

Yeager honored as the first Pennsylvania Visionary

Clay Yeager, former Executive Director of the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research, was honored recently with the first Visionary of Pennsylvania Award at the Promising Practices for Promising Youth 2002 Conference, which took place in DuBois, Pennsylvania.

Approximately 200 educators, human services professionals, and community leaders from 18 counties, along with nearly 50 youth, gathered to talk about promising approaches to racism, troubled youth, substance abuse, discipline problems, failure, bullying, hopelessness, families in crisis, school violence, and behavioral disorders.

Yeager was recognized for his immeasurable contributions to youth-violence prevention and for helping Pennsylvania to develop one of the most far-reaching and coordinated prevention strategies in the nation.

Act 85 of 2002 amends Crime Victims Act

Governor Schweiker signed SB 380 (2060) into law as Act 85 of 2002 on June 28, 2002. This legislation, which becomes effective on August 27, 2002, increases the costs that are assessed to juvenile offenders who are adjudicated delinquent or who receive consent decrees from \$15 to \$25. All of the costs collected under this provision are used to support the Commonwealth's Crime Victims' Compensation Program. Act 85 also includes the following amendments the Crime Victims' Compensation Program:

- The time limit for filing a claim is extended from one to two years and, in cases involving a minor, extends the claim deadline until the victim reaches the age of twenty-three.
- The definition of "out-of-pocket loss" is expanded to include the following expenses, that will be reimbursed at a rate set by the Office of Victims' Services: wheelchairs; canes; walkers; hearing aids; expenses related to the reasonable and necessary costs of cleaning the crime scene of a private residence; expenses resulting from the temporary

or permanent relocation of a direct victim and individuals residing in the household of the direct victim when there is an immediate need to protect the safety and health of the victim and individuals residing in the household; and other reasonable expenses which are deemed necessary as a direct result of the criminal incident.

- The maximum allowable emergency award is increased to \$1,500, or at a rate set by the Office of Victims' Services.

- The list of individuals who are eligible to receive reimbursement for psychological and psychiatric counseling is expanded.

- The cost of a forensic rape examination and medications prescribed to the direct victim may not be charged to the victim. The hospital or other licensed health care provider may submit a claim for reimbursement from the Crime Victims' Compensation Program if the cost is not covered by insurance, or if the victim requests that the insurance carrier not be billed.

- The costs assessed to an adult who pleads guilty or nolo contendere, is placed in a diversionary program, or is convicted of a crime are increased from \$40 to \$60.

- The amount of the costs to be deposited into the Crime Victims' Compensation Program is increased from \$15 to \$35 in the case of an adult offender.

- Victims now have the right to have notice and provide prior comment on a judicial recommendation that an adult participate in a motivational boot camp pursuant to the Motivational Boot Camp Act.

- In personal injury crimes, where an adult is sentenced to a state correctional facility, victims now have the right to receive notice of, and to provide prior comment on, a recommendation by the Department of Corrections that an adult offender participate in a motivational boot camp pursuant to the Motivational Boot Camp Act.

- In personal injury crimes where an adult is sentenced to a local correctional facility, victims now have the right to receive notice of the date of the release of the adult from a boot camp.

Compassion Capital Funds for addiction programs

Alcohol and other drug prevention and treatment programs are among those eligible for \$24.5 million in funding under the new Compassion Capital Fund Demonstration Program. The Compassion Capital grants are intended to expand the participation of faith-based and other community-based groups in meeting the social-service needs of poor and low-income families and communities. An announcement from the Department of Health and Human Services says the grants intend to "help level the playing field for faith- and community-based organizations competing for federal grants and other funding." Awards of up to \$1 million will be made available to 15-25 organizations that provide technical assistance to help faith-based and community organizations access funding sources, operate and manage their programs, develop and train staff, expand programs in the community, and replicate promising programs. Technical assistance will be provided at no cost to these groups. The intermediary organizations that receive Compassion Capital funding will also make awards to faith- and community-based organizations to help pay for start-up costs, operations, or expansion of programs. Priority for these grants will be given to programs that address homelessness, hunger, the needs of at-risk children, transition from welfare to work, and those in need of intensive rehabilitation, such as people with addictions or prisoners. Deadline for applications is July 22. For more information, see the Compassion Capital Fund website at www.hhs.gov/faith/compass.html or call 800-281-9519.

Visit <http://www.jointogether.org> for complete news and funding coverage, resource links and advocacy tools supporting community-based efforts to reduce and prevent substance abuse and gun violence. Join Together is a project of the Boston University School of Public Health. This information may be freely reproduced and distributed, provided that attribution is made to Join Together Online (www.jointogether.org). (Mail ID: 130752)

Save the Date

The Juvenile Detention Centers'
Association of Pennsylvania
(JDCAP)
will be holding it's annual conference

"Beacon of Hope:
Creating a Brighter Future
for our Youth"
September 25-27
Days Inn Penn State

for more information, call
Nicole Remsburg, JDCAP Executive Director
717-526-1010

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This program also teaches simple skills and fosters a sense of work ethic, moral/ethical values, and respect. Individual and group exercises including victim sensitivity, anger management, conflict resolution, team building, etc., are conducted.

This program has been well received by the community; many positive articles have been written about the benefits to the local residents as well as the youth involved. In the past year 71 referrals were accepted into the SPOKE program with 42 youth completing their work obligations, with the remainder still active in the program. As mentioned earlier, along with the 50 hours of community service hours ordered, a youth could work off any monies owed to crime victims from the proceeds of the firewood sales. Last year over \$15,000 was paid to crime victims from this program. The total number of work hours completed last year was 3127 @ \$5.15 per hour, or \$16,104.05 in free labor. Other projects completed by the youth last year included renovations of Little League fields, washing and waxing county vehicles, tree removal at the Human Service Agency ropes course, and restoration of local cemeteries. The total number of full cords of wood sold and delivered was 258.

Review of Research: Gang Involvement and Delinquency in a Middle School Population

by G. David Curry, Scott H. Decker, and Arlen Egley, Jr.

In their recent study, Curry, Decker, and Egley explored the relationship between gang membership and delinquent behavior. While previous research uncovered a relationship between self-reported gang membership and delinquency, Curry and his colleagues examined whether the same relationship holds for those who are involved with gang members without claiming membership themselves. In short, in this study they explored the relationship between different levels of gang involvement and delinquency. Level of gang membership was determined by the use of self-reported measures, and measures of delinquency were determined by both self-reports and referrals to juvenile court.

Curry, Decker, and Egley surveyed a population of students attending middle school in St. Louis, Missouri. Three types of middle schools were selected on the basis of their proximity or distance from concentrations of gang homicides. The three types of schools were schools in poor neighborhoods with gang problems, schools in middle-class neighborhoods with few gang problems, and “academies” which are reserved for students with disciplinary or legal problems. Curry and his colleagues believed that the respondents reflected, “the general character of students in this urban district” (p. 280).

Of the 533 middle school students who completed the survey, 49 percent (260) reported that they had some involvement with gangs, but were not official gang members. Curry and his colleagues called these students “gang involved.” Of the remaining students, 36 percent (193) were not involved with gangs at all, and 15 percent (80) reported that they were members of a gang.

Curry, Decker, and Egley discovered that “even a minimal amount of involvement in gang-related behaviors” separated “gang involved” youths from their “uninvolved peers in terms of self-reported and officially recorded delinquency” (p. 288). Almost 50 percent of the gang member youths were referred to the juvenile court for a delinquent act, compared to 37 percent of the gang involved youth and 24 percent of the not involved youth. This is significant, because Curry and his colleagues found

that increased involvement in gang-related activities not only enhances an adolescent’s risk of delinquency, but of becoming victimized as well. (This finding concurs with previous literature on gang involved youth). Victimization was measured by self-reports of being threatened with a gun, shot at, or injured by a gunshot. Adolescents who were a gang-involved non-members were three times more likely than adolescents with no gang involvement to be shot at.

Curry, Decker, and Egley believe that the increased levels of offending associated with gang behaviors underscore the need to address both gang-involved and marginally involved youths, since the relationship between gang membership and delinquency emerges in early adolescence. They suggest that a longitudinal survey design is required to discover if identified gang associates are in a transitional phase that would lead to full gang membership, or if their association with gangs would fade.

Curry and his colleagues support the need for early prevention and intervention programs with youths and families, especially in neighborhoods with high levels of gang membership or in families with older siblings who are gang members. Their findings also underscore the need for gang intervention programs that deal with actively involved gang members, as well as individuals who are peripheral to the gang.

This study is published in the June 2002 issue of *Justice Quarterly*, a publication of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.



Sallie Lynagh, Children's Advocacy Specialist with the Pennsylvania Protection and Advocacy, Inc., held the attention of the audience with a presentation on special education law and its applicability to the role of probation officers in working with students with disabilities at the school-based probation forum in State College.

2nd forum on school-based probation held in State College

Warm central Pennsylvania weather greeted three school principals and 94 school-based probation officers and supervisors, representing 38 counties, as they convened on June 20 and 21 in State College for the second Juvenile Court Judges' Commission-sponsored School-Based Probation Forum.

Day one began with activity reports from the Training Committee, Contact Committee, and Forum Committee. The Manual Revision Committee unveiled and distributed the newly revised School-Based Probation Manual. The manual was developed as a resource for school-based probation officers and others involved in program administration. This revision includes a history of school-based probation, goals of school-based probation, implementation issues, letters of agreement, supervision plan guidelines, funding, public information, policy issues and numerous web-based resources. Included are the results of a statewide survey that profiles summer programs or activities participated in by officers. Additional copies can be obtained by contacting Keith Graybill at the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, 717-787-2860, or kgraybill@state.pa.us. It is anticipated the manual will soon be available in disk or on-line format.

Participants also met in break out groups to share the most improved aspects of their respective school-based program and to critically evaluate their program based on mission identification and ability to measure progress. Participant's also related strategies utilized to increase educational competency, reduce truancy, and hold probationers accountable for behavioral problems.

A presentation by the National Center for Juvenile Justice provided attendees with the current status of their ongoing school-based research pilot project. NCJJ has invited additional counties to participate in an expanded project scheduled to begin in the fall of 2002. Sallie Lynagh, a Children's Advocacy Specialist with the Pennsylvania Protection and Advocacy, Inc., held the attention of attendees with a presentation on special education law and its applicability to the role of probation officers in working with students with disabilities.

As evidenced by the accounts of officers and administrators, school-based probation continues to be a viable venue to help accomplish the goals of the juvenile justice system in Pennsylvania. A committee of school-based probation officers planned this year's forum and will be meeting to plan for next year's forum scheduled for June 19-20, 2003. Plan now to be part of this opportunity to share common experiences and challenges.

SAMHSA Spotlights 25 Model Prevention Programs

Prolonged Exposure Therapy for PTSD (post traumatic stress disorder), from Philadelphia, is one of 25 private programs given government approval for its coverage of a wide range of drug-prevention strategies, Reuters reported June 7. “The goal is to provide a clear quality standard for drug-prevention strategies,” said Charles G. Curie, administrator of the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Association (SAMHSA).

The exemplary programs identified by SAMHSA have shown scientific evidence of effectiveness either in preventing young people from using drugs or in controlling behaviors with a proven link to later drug use. Among the strategies are those that strengthen parent-child relationships, address college drinking, or focus on juvenile criminal tendencies or depression.

Health officials made the recommendations as part of an ongoing government effort to focus public funding on programs that produce verifiable results. The next step is for federal and private addiction experts to devise a method for disseminating and replicating the successful programs nationwide.

SAMHSA’s National Dissemination System identifies model programs, provides training and technical assistance and works with states, localities and the private sector to ensure effective implementation. Community leaders and interested organizations can access information on model programs and services available at www.modelprograms.samhsa.gov.

