

a newsletter of the

Pennsylvania  
Juvenile Court  
Judges'  
Commission

# P E N N S Y L V A N I A J U V E N I L E J U S T I C E

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## 2004 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice

The 2004 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice was held at the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers November 3-5, 2004. Approximately 1,100 people registered for the annual event.

The conference began on Wednesday, November 3, with professional caucuses for judges/juvenile court masters, chief and deputy chief juvenile probation officers, juvenile probation supervisors, juvenile probation officers, victim services providers, service providers, and defense counsel. The caucuses were interactive and provided conference participants with the opportunity to discuss critical issues and needs. A Chief Juvenile Probation Officer and Service Provider Forum was held after the professional caucuses to provide chief juvenile probation officers and both public and private service providers with a special opportunity to discuss issues affecting Pennsylvania's juvenile justice system.

The Youth Awards Program and Dinner was held Wednesday evening, with more than 600 people in attendance. This year's speaker was Luis Garcia, who moved to the United States with his family with the hope of achieving the American dream. Reaching that dream was not easy for them. Luis shared his dramatic story of choosing to pursue higher education over a life of gang involvement and violence, including the violent deaths of six of his best friends. Luis credited Ms. Loida Cruz, who worked with Luis as a child in conjunction with Pennsylvania's Migrant Education Program, for helping and supporting him throughout that critical period in his life. The audience received a special treat when Luis and Loida were reunited for the first time in many years during the Youth Awards Program. Luis is currently Assistant Admissions Director at Millersville University.

The Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers sponsored an opening night reception on Wednesday evening, to provide friends and colleagues from across Pennsylvania and throughout the nation with an informal opportunity to meet once again.

After JCJC Chairman and Lehigh County Judge Carol K. McGinley provided the conference welcome, Dr. Scott R. Henggeler, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at the Medical University of

*2004 Conference, continued on back page*



**Adeline Beighley**  
Westmoreland County  
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer  
of the Year



**Sandra G. Kline**  
Delaware County  
Juvenile Probation Supervisor  
of the Year



**Deborah L. Slates-Cioccio**  
Westmoreland County  
Juvenile Probation Officer  
of the Year

**Pearl F. Snyder**  
Westmoreland County  
Meritorious Service Award



**Marjorie A. Bing Stanislaw**  
Westmoreland County  
Juvenile Court Support Service

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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**Christina M. Grube**  
Shippensburg University  
Undergraduate Scholarship Award



**Kimmy Mulik**  
Dr. Anthony F. Ceddia Award for  
Outstanding Scholarship  
in Juvenile Justice



**Jim McCloy**  
Executive Director  
Susquehanna House, Inc.  
Residential Program of the Year



**Hon. John J. Driscoll**  
Westmoreland County  
PTSD Project  
Court-operated Program  
of the Year



**Shawn L. Witmer**  
Program Coordinator  
The Manito Day Treatment  
Browns Mill Center  
Community-based Program  
of the Year



## Sam Miller is new chief in Cumberland County

On August 9, 2004, the Honorable George E. Hoffer, President Judge, appointed Samuel E. Miller Jr. as the new Chief Probation Officer in Cumberland County.

Miller started his career as a juvenile probation officer in Blair County. After serving three years in the United States Army Intelligence Field and several years as a police officer, he began working for the Cumberland County Probation Office. During his tenure at the Cumberland County Juvenile Probation Department, Miller developed a community services diversionary program which included individual treatment and counseling. Immediately prior to his recent appointment he was the supervisor of intake, diversionary programs, and specialized probation services for the department.

Miller is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Law Enforcement Corrections. He also obtained a Masters Degree in Administration of Justice from Shippensburg University.

Already since his appointment, Mr. Miller has designed a plan for introducing Family Group Conferencing and a Youth Aid Panel to the juvenile justice system in Cumberland County.

## York County Juvenile Court Hosts 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Breakfast

The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual York County Juvenile Court Awards Breakfast was held on October 5, 2004, at the Manchester Township Building in York County. The theme for this year's program was "The Creation of a Thousand Forests is in one Acorn," written by Ralph Waldo Emerson. More than 130 individuals, including representatives from community organizations, court employees, state representatives, and county commissioners were in attendance.

The program began with York County Commissioner Lori Mitrick reading a proclamation declaring Juvenile Justice Week in York County. Chief Juvenile Probation Director Dan Rhoads then provided all in attendance with a copy of York County's first Outcomes Report for calendar year 2003, and highlighted the following outcomes: 90.4 percent of all Youth Aid Panel cases did not re-offend; 12,151 hours of community service were completed; 76 percent of juveniles paid their restitution in full at case closing; and \$148,709 in restitution was paid to crime victims.

During the awards part of the program, David Godfrey was named Police Officer of the Year. The Support Staff of the Year award went to Marcy Carr-Eady. Community Service Site of the Year was the Southern York County Library, and Jennifer Mann was named Probation Officer of the Year.

The E.B. Frock Memorial Award went to Gene Hejmanowski, School Employee of the Year was Michael Alessandrone, and the award for Program of the Year went to the Youth Aid Panel Program. The Inter-Agency Employee of the Year was Barbara Krier, the Youth Development Employee of the Year was Matthew Wagner, and the Youth Accomplishment Award went to Jonathan Roh.

# Family Group Decision Making in Pennsylvania being led by Statewide Implementation Team

by: Honorable Todd A. Hoover, Dauphin County Juvenile Court

**F**amily Group Decision Making (FGDM) in Pennsylvania is an exciting and innovative practice. As a Dauphin County Juvenile Court Judge, there is no other practice which I have observed that brings more enthusiasm from case-workers, community, and families. Family Group Decision Making is a respectful process that invites a family, its extended family and community, probation officers, caseworkers, and service providers to come together and plan for the welfare of children by having the family act as primary decision makers for their children.

Sandy Moore, Dauphin County Human Services Director/Children and Youth Administrator, first mentioned the topic of FGDM to me in the summer of 2001. Two months later The Pennsylvania Office of Children, Youth & Families, along with Dauphin County Social Services for Children and Youth, brought a nationally recognized consultant, Jim Nice, to Dauphin County for training. After attending the training session it became clear to me that FGDM was an innovative and common-sense approach to working with children and families.

At that point, I determined that this was a practice worthy of our time and effort and that we had an obligation to make this approach available to our families and children. If we say we value our families, then Family Group Decision Making is worth the time and effort it takes to bring families together to solve their own problems (concerns). If professionals alone are the only ones to define the concerns, we overlook a valuable resource and restrict the roles that families play in defining their own concerns and finding solutions to them.

I have come to realize, after more than ten years on the bench, that many of the concerns we see in the courtroom are what many families deal with around the kitchen table. If children were having behavior concerns, school concerns, truancy concerns in our own families, we would most likely sit around that kitchen table and work out as best we could solutions to these concerns. Unfortunately, all too often those concerns are now brought into the courtroom.

FGDM is a refreshing way to return to the “kitchen

table” with the help of the juvenile probation officers and/or caseworkers, to solve family concerns. Leading this transformation is the FGDM Statewide Implementation Team. Unlike any other state in the country, Pennsylvania counties and the OCYF intentionally established this team to lead our effort, support one another, and stay true to the practice.

Thanks to the leadership of the Statewide Implementation Team and the support of the OCYF, FGDM is positioned to be implemented across systems in more than 27 counties throughout Pennsylvania. The Statewide Implementation Team has been a model of what FGDM is all about. Co-chair Peter Vriens, Adams County Children & Youth Administrator, and I, have the privilege of setting the bi-monthly meeting agenda with a core group of members from the team. Based on the inclusive model of FGDM, the voices of all team members are solicited and appreciated in this process.

## Best Practices for Mobilizers and Project Directors – CTC

**T**he Center for Juvenile Justice Training & Research held a special training at Shippensburg University for Communities That Care® sites on October 27 called “Best Practices for Mobilizers and Project Directors.” Forty-six community mobilizers and project directors attended the training, which featured presentations on a variety of topics by regional strategic consultant staff and a panel discussion of best practices. The panel was made up of CTC project directors and community mobilizers.

Diane Rowland of Schuylkill County CTC discussed “Board Structure and Collaboration Leading to Sustaining Efforts;” Donna Calvert, Greene County CTC, discussed “Successfully Intertwining Multiple Initiatives.” Michelle Connely, Slatebelt CTC (Northampton County), provided information on creating greater public awareness and Karin Knode, Mifflin County CTC, discussed developing an annual report.

*Mobilizers continued on back page*

## Teen Court celebrates a decade of operation in Clearfield County

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Clearfield County's Teen Court program celebrated a decade of successful operation at a special reception on October 15, 2004, at the Clearfield County Courthouse. The Juvenile Court Judges' Commission presented Clearfield County's Teen Court Program with an Outstanding Achievement Certificate.

Clearfield County's Teen Court Program was the first teen court program in the state when it was established in 1994 and has since become a model program throughout the state and across the north-east region of the United States, according to President Judge Fredric J. Ammerman. Communities from throughout Pennsylvania and other states in the region have sent representatives to observe the program.

To qualify for Teen Court, a juvenile must be a first-time offender and between the ages of 12 and 17. Most of the offenses that go to Teen Court are non-traffic summary offenses such as disorderly conduct, criminal mischief, underage drinking, harassment, minor simple assault, littering, trespassing, and retail theft, according to Judge Ammerman.

The Teen Court Program allows juvenile offenders to have their punishment decided by a jury of their peers rather than go before the district magistrate.

Participation in the program is voluntary and juvenile offenders are tried at proceedings conducted with other students acting as prosecutors, defense attorneys, and jury, with an adult volunteer presiding as judge.

The Teen Court doesn't decide guilt or innocence, rather what the offender's punishment should be, which is usually community service, a letter of apology, and restitution to the victim, depending on the offense. According to Judge Ammerman, juveniles who participate in the Teen Court Program can avoid the juvenile justice system and avoid having a permanent juvenile record if they successfully complete the program.

The Teen Court Program provides a valuable education to both offenders and student volunteers on how the criminal justice system works. The number of student volunteers in the Teen Court Program has grown significantly during the past ten years. In 1994, there were 207 student volunteers; by 2003-04 that number had grown to 493. Since it was begun, 553 offenders have successfully completed the program, with only 235 withdrawals. The Teen Court Program runs on a yearly budget of approximately \$17,000, most of which comes from donations from 14 contributing organizations which have supported the program since its inception.

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## Making a difference: Lehigh County juvenile probation officers Roslyn Fendrick and Jason Weaver

Although they share a combined 26 years of juvenile probation experience, Roslyn Fendrick and Jason Weaver have only been work partners since October of 2002. It is difficult to measure the countless number of young lives they have positively affected, but their dedication and passion for their work is being recognized by school officials, community members, police departments, families in turmoil, and victims of crime.

Sharing the southern portion of Lehigh County, the two operate in three school districts where they typically have a combined 85 cases between them. It is amazing to consider what they have accomplished together in those two short years. They have secured

and directed over 100 community service workcrews during this period. One of the more unique ones occurs semi-weekly at the Lower Milford Township Fire Company, where Roz and Jason, along with 10 juveniles, serve a family-style dinner during which the juveniles experience ongoing interaction with positive adults from their community.

Other noteworthy relationships include those with school administrators and law enforcement. While they visit schools to meet with probation juveniles, they can also often be observed leading group discussions with youth not under their supervision. Further, several times per month, Roz and Jason, work in concert with police on night patrols where

they will jointly meet with families to share an open exchange of information. Observing the family dynamics in a more natural setting than the courthouse has proven invaluable when searching for causes of certain behaviors.

Their cooperative efforts with police have evolved to such an extent that they were recently recognized at a formal ceremony, by the Emmaus Police Department, for their contributions to that community. During one episode in particular, their actions were integral in ridding a neighborhood park of ongoing drug activity. The true impact of this instance was displayed when a resident thanked them for helping to take back the park for the children.

## Staff Development News

The CJJT&R Spring 2005 Staff Development Schedule has been mailed. The e-mail version went out during the week of December 13. If you would like to receive an e-mail copy of the schedule, please send mail to Nina Weaver, [nsweav@wgarf.ship.edu](mailto:nsweav@wgarf.ship.edu).

Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis; the Center will accept registrations until the day prior to each program. Early registration is encouraged, payment of registration fees may follow later.

The schedule may also be reviewed at the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission website [www.jcjc.state.pa.us](http://www.jcjc.state.pa.us) and registrations, changes, confirmations, and cancellations may be made via e-mail directed to [nsweav@wharf.ship.edu](mailto:nsweav@wharf.ship.edu) or by phone to Nina Weaver, 717-477-1448. If an e-mail address is supplied, confirmations of all registrations, cancellations, or changes will be provided via e-mail.

The schedule includes 27 programs, blending several new offerings with core curriculum workshops for staff new to the system, and programs that were held during the last few seasons that either received stellar evaluation feedback, and/or where programs filled, interested participants had to be turned away, and we were asked to repeat sessions.

Because of several program's non-traditional schedules, and the continuing use of five separate training sites, in order to avoid confusion, we are urging administrators and/or agency training coordinators to provide each registrant with a photocopy of the

one-page program description, excerpted from the training booklet, for each program they will be attending to serve as a reminder of the program's learning objectives, dates, times and location.

The Juvenile Justice Academy for New Juvenile Probation Officers will be held on January 31-February 4, and February 28-March 4. In March practitioners will have seven other programs to choose from including: "Our Fathers Who are Not in Heaven or Hell: *Fathers Are Parents, Too!*" led by Phil Washington, March 10-11, in Mechanicsburg. The first of two regional offerings "Adolescents, Human Sexuality, and Substance Abuse" will be presented by Bruce Schaffer March 15-16 in the Allentown area and March 31-April 1 in the Pittsburgh area.

"Introduction to Family Group Decision Making," with Jim Nice, March 16-17 in State College, is scheduled especially to allow chiefs and supervisors to attend prior to the March 18 PA Chief's Council's General Membership meeting at the Days Inn Penn State. "Conflict Resolution: For Ourselves and our Clients" will be presented by Renée Verbanic March 22-23 in Mechanicsburg. "Aftercare Probation Forum" is scheduled for March 30-31 in State College, and, "70 Strategies and Techniques for Working with Difficult, Defiant Adolescents," led by Fred Hanna, March 31-April 1 in State College.

If you have not yet received a copy of the Center's training schedule and would like to review the offerings in printed form, or if you have any further questions regarding these or other staff development opportunities please contact Stephen Bishop at 717-477-1294 or John Herb at 717-477-1185, and press 3.

### *Conference, from page one*

South Carolina, provided the keynote presentation on “Evidence-based Treatment Programs for Juvenile Offenders and why they Work”. Dr. Henggeler is also Director of the Family Services Research Center (FSRC), which develops, validates, and studies the dissemination of clinically effective and cost effective mental health and substance abuse services for children presenting serious clinical problems and their families. FSRC projects have included many community-based randomized trials with challenging clinical populations such as violent and chronic juvenile offenders, youths presenting psychiatric emergencies, substance abusing juvenile offenders, and maltreating families.

Following the keynote presentation, a play titled *A Body In Motion* was presented in the Sunoco Performing Arts Theater by a talented cast of four actors under the direction of playwright Ingrid De Sanctis. The play was based on Howard Zehr’s book *Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims*, featuring stories and transcripts of survivors of crimes. The play presented the many complex and varied responses to a violent event with hope and transcendence.

The conference featured 27 training workshops on Thursday afternoon detailing innovative and diverse juvenile justice programs. The workshops were well received; it is anticipated that a number of the programs will be replicated in other jurisdictions.

The Annual Awards Dinner and Program was the featured event on Thursday evening. This program is an opportunity for the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system to show its appreciation by honoring those who work hard to make a difference in the lives of the young people who have been entrusted to its care. The Juvenile Court Judges’ Commission, in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers, takes great pride in honoring outstanding individuals and exemplary programs from across the Commonwealth (award-winners are pictured on pages 2 and 3).

The conference concluded on Friday morning with Resource Day, 2004, an annual event offering participants an opportunity to meet with representatives from 98 public and private residential service providers, informational services, and others whose products and services play an important role in the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system.

### *Mobilizers, from page 5*

Christy Renjilian, of York/Suburban CTC Alliance, and Kathy Gottwald Peffer, of Lower Dauphin CTC, presented information on sustainability plans. Dr. Mona Eckley Claysburg-Kimmel CTC (Blair County) provided an example of social entrepreneurship as a method to raise local dollars to sustain efforts and Judee Guth, Clearfield County CTC, discussed the use of local funds to leverage additional funds.

The Regional Strategic Consultants (RSCs) presented information on a variety of topics important to local CTC sites and prevention boards. Tom Bux, Southeast RSC, provided an overview of cross systems integration. Michele Ambruch, Northeast RSC, presented information on board management; Joe Markiewicz, Northwest RSC, discussed cost benefit analysis, return on investment and evaluation/outcomes; Tracy Shultz, Southwest RSC, provided an overview of social enterprise and marketing; and Michelle Timulak, Central RSC, shared information on what’s new with CTC.

