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2005 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice

The 2005 Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice was held at the Harrisburg Hilton and Towers on November 2-4, 2005. Approximately 1,200 people registered for the annual event.

The conference began on Wednesday, November 2nd, 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, defense counsel, and prevention practitioners. The caucuses were highly 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 over 600 people in attendance. This year's speaker was Marvin Worthy, who spent his early childhood in the rural south in the midst of poverty and racism. Upon moving to Philadelphia, his environment was replete with drugs and violence. Marvin's future looked bleak until a teacher took a special interest in him, encouraged him, and gave him the confidence to pursue a path of higher education. Marvin eventually earned his Masters Degree from Shippensburg University, and is now a private Consultant who motivates others "to live a life that matters."

After JCJC Chairman and Berks County Judge Arthur E. Grim provided the **Conference Welcome** on Thursday morning, Clay Yeager, President and CEO of Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), and Dr. David Olds Professor of Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Preventive Medicine at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center and Director of the Prevention Research Center for Family and Child Health presented to an audience of approximately 275 conference attendees. The **Keynote Presentation** was titled, "**Research to Results: The Nurse-Family Partnership**". The presentations provided valuable information regarding this internationally acclaimed evidence-based program that matches young, pregnant, low income women with specially trained nurses to improve the health of mothers and children from low-income families toward the outcome of prevention violence.

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David Stager
Tioga County
Chief Juvenile Probation Officer
of the Year



Thomas J. Ganser
Lehigh County
Juvenile Probation Supervisor
of the Year



Kathy Dickinson
Blair County
Juvenile Probation Officer
of the Year

Valerie Dixon
Meritorious Service Award



Joyce Bell
Delaware County
Juvenile Court
Support Service Award

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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Nicole Hutchinson
Shippensburg University
Undergraduate Scholarship Award



Kelly Waltman-Spreha
Dr. Anthony F. Ceddia Award for
Outstanding Scholarship
in Juvenile Justice



Mark Mortimer
Executive Director
Residential Program of the Year



Hon. John C. Uhler
York County
Court-operated Program
of the Year



Richard B. Armstrong
Vice-President of Programs
Community-based Program
of the Year

Professionals gather at 2005 Pa Conference

On Wednesday, November 2, 2005, the Pennsylvania Conference on Juvenile Justice began with professional caucuses, which provided conference participants with an opportunity to interact with colleagues and discuss critical issues. Caucuses were held for judges/juvenile court masters, chief juvenile probation officers, juvenile probation supervisors, juvenile probation officers, victim service providers, delinquency service providers, providers of prevention services and defense counsel.

The judges discussed many issues including the Integrated Children's Services Initiative (Medical Assistance Realignment), the recently adopted Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure, license suspensions relating to driving under the influence, the ten day time-frame requirement for adjudication hearings for youth held in secure detention, parental liability, restitution, mental health services for children, electronic monitoring, Title IV-E administrative costs, aftercare, assessments, and "step-down" services for individuals committed to the Sexual Responsibility and Treatment Program pursuant to Act 21 of 2003.

The chief juvenile probation officer caucus focused on improved aftercare services, how those various initiatives will be funded, and to what extent information from the MacArthur Models for Change Aftercare Project will be collected, analyzed and communicated to the chiefs. Several chiefs shared information on new developments that occurred in their respective jurisdictions, such as increased gang activity and an increase in referrals of illegal aliens and the lack of response from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. A discussion of the outcome measures data collected for 2004 focused on how to use the data to improve services to juveniles.

Juvenile probation supervisors discussed services for juveniles and training needs. A number of training issues were identified, including a suggestion for a supervisor forum, which has been scheduled for May 3 and 4, 2006. The supervisors discussed the need for additional training on grant writing and funding streams, how to read and understand mental health reports, management and personnel issues, an overview of the Juvenile Act and the recently adopted Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure. Stephen Bishop, Assistant Director of Training at CJJT&R, spoke about web-based training programs as an alternative to attending CJJT&R training workshops. Services for juveniles, restitution collection and community engagement were identified as concerns among the supervisors. Several of the participants offered ideas for enhanced

community involvement, including mentoring programs, Youth Aid Panels, involvement in crime watch meetings and partnerships with law enforcement and other service providers.

Juvenile probation officers echoed concerns that were raised in other caucuses. They discussed the need for more timely psychological evaluations and increased cooperation with local mental health offices due to the Integrated Children's Service Initiative. Restitution collection, community involvement and services for juveniles returning home from placement were areas identified as consistently challenging. Several of the training topics that were suggested included Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure, working with youth who have disabilities, safety, search and seizure, recently enacted legislation, relevant case law, and more regionalized training.

A prevention caucus was held for the first time, and discussions focused on what additional resources communities need to sustain existing Communities That Care® (CTC) sites and other valuable programs currently in operation. Some communities have seen the benefit of blueprint programs such as Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy, which are now eligible for reimbursement through medical assistance. Challenges that communities continue to encounter include increasing the amount of parent and youth involvement, and suggestions were offered by jurisdictions that have been successful in increasing this involvement. Five Pennsylvania communities involved in CTC were recently acknowledged through America's Promise as among the 100 Best Communities for Youth.

The caucus for providers of victim services included discussions on a number of issues. Many of the participants reported that they have good relationships with juvenile probation departments and district attorneys offices. It was suggested that the roles and responsibilities of both the juvenile probation officer and victim advocate should be routinely reviewed and defined. The participants felt that written policies, procedures and training on victim awareness and sexual assault are critical. It was agreed that where staff turnover frequently occurs, the confusion around responsibilities remains a problem. Compliance with the Crime Victim's Act was discussed, and it was noted that victim notifications sometimes do not occur with regularity for informal adjustments, consent decrees, continuances and releases from placement. Restorative practices were mentioned including the improvement of restitution collection through the development of restitution funds, lower caseload

sizes for victim advocates, Victim Offender Conferencing where appropriate and when possible, and training on victim involvement in Youth Aid Panels. The issue of accountability was discussed as it related to juveniles who violate the conditions of a consent decree. Strong judicial leadership is necessary to improve this process. The providers all agreed that while victims want juveniles held accountable for their actions, they are most often concerned with ensuring that juveniles get the help or services that they may need.

There were 23 counties represented at the caucus for juvenile defenders this year. Discussion focused on the Juvenile Court Procedural Rules, collateral consequences of adjudications of delinquency, and overrepresentation of minority children. This is the second year that juvenile defenders have participated in the conference, as part of a statewide training initiative. The caucuses have assisted in the development of relationships among juvenile defenders across the state.

Three topics were addressed in the caucus for service providers, including MA realignment; DPW's Restraint Reduction/Elimination initiative and aftercare. Concerns were expressed about the impact that MA realignment will have on both small and large service providers, as well as rate negotiations with managed care entities, and the impact on Act 148 funding for placements deemed to be no longer medically necessary. Providers felt that the restraint reduction/elimination initiative appears unrealistic for programs that work with juvenile delinquents, and the concerns about the financial impact and safety of staff were also expressed. Providers were aware of the MacArthur Models for Change Project and were familiar with the Joint Position Statement on Aftercare. Participants were provided with additional information on this initiative and were interested in learning more and becoming involved.

Feedback from each of the caucuses showed that professionals appreciate the opportunity to meet with colleagues and share information regarding issues they encounter on a day to day basis.

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The conference featured **Training Workshops** on Thursday afternoon detailing 27 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 **afternoon Plenary Session** titled "**Achieving Excellence in Juvenile Justice: The Pennsylvania**

Mark Caldwell retires as McKean County's Director of Juvenile Probation Office

On October 1, 2005, Mark Caldwell retired as McKean County's Chief Juvenile Probation Officer. He spent 34 years as an employee of McKean County in various capacities.

Mark Caldwell was hired as an adult probation officer in September of 1971. He was appointed as Chief Adult Probation Officer in 1979. After serving as Chief Adult Probation Officer for five years, Caldwell was appointed Court Administrator in 1984. In 1993, he was named Director of Juvenile Probation and Family Services as a Custody Mediator. From May of 2004, to May of 2005, Mark was the Director of Juvenile Probation and the Director of Children and Youth Services. In June, 2005, he relinquished his role as the Director of Children and Youth Services and remained the Director of Juvenile Probation until his retirement on October 1, 2005.

In the capacity of Director of Juvenile Probation, Mark, along with the Honorable John M. Cleland and Dave Miller, was instrumental in developing McKean County's Boondocs Program. Boondocs is a unique conservation and education project which uses the construction of trout stream improvement devices as a means of providing treatment to delinquent and dependent children of McKean County. In 1997, McKean County's Boondocs Program was selected as a finalist for the Project of the Year for the Three Rivers Environmental Award sponsored by the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. The Boondocs program was also one of several programs nominated for Trout Unlimited Program of the Year.

Since his retirement as Director of Juvenile Probation, Mark continues his work as a custody mediator for McKean County and completes special projects for Judge Cleland.

nia / MacArthur Foundation Partnership, featured a panel discussion led by Dr. Ron Sharp, Chair of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Subcommittee of the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). Since Pennsylvania was the first state chosen to participate in the *Models for Change* initiative of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the panel focused on the progress and uniqueness of *Conference, continued on back page*

Screening and Assessment Training Scheduled for 1/19/06

A one-day training program, scheduled from 9:30 AM – 4 PM on January 19, 2006 at the Days Inn Penn State, will be held as a follow-up to the May 2005 training program on screening and assessment instruments. The purpose of this training program is to provide more in-depth information on a selected number of screening and assessment instruments to assist chief juvenile probation officers in determining which instrument to utilize in their jurisdictions.

The Research Committee of the Pa. Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers met several times since the May 2005 training program to narrow the field of screening and assessment instruments that would be appropriate for use by juvenile probation departments in Pennsylvania. At their November 2005 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Pa. Council of Chief Juvenile Probation Officers endorsed the concept of this “hands-on” training program, conducted by individuals who use the following six screening/assessment instruments:

- Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument (MAYSI-2)
- Problem Oriented Screening Instrument for Teenagers (POSIT)
- Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS-JJ)
- Youth Level of Service (YLS)
- Washington State Juvenile Court Assessment
- Intervention Needs and Competency Assessment (INCA)

Please contact Keith Snyder at (717) 787-5634, or at ksnyder@state.pa.us, if you have any questions or desire additional information.

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this important initiative.

The **Annual Awards Dinner and Program** was the featured event on Thursday evening. This program is an opportunity for Pennsylvania’s 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 their 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 (see featured award winner captions). This program also marked the 25th anniversary of the Annual Awards Program event.

The conference concluded on Friday morning with **Resource Day, 2005**, an annual event offering participants an opportunity to meet with representatives from numerous public and private residential service providers, informational services, and others whose products and services play an important role in the Pennsylvania juvenile justice system.

Teresa Wilcox is new Director of McKean County Juvenile Probation

On October 1, 2005, the Honorable John M. Cleland, President Judge, appointed Teresa Wilcox as the new director of juvenile probation in McKean County.

Ms. Wilcox started her career in McKean County as a school-based probation officer in June, 1999. She held this position until she became the placement specialist for McKean County in March, 2001. In this role, Ms. Wilcox was responsible for selecting appropriate placement facilities for juveniles in McKean County as well as monitoring juveniles committed to residential placement facilities and juveniles on aftercare supervision.

Ms. Wilcox is a graduate of Misericordia where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History/Pre-Law with a minor in Political Science. She is currently enrolled at Shippensburg University where she will earn a Masters Degree in Administration of Justice in August, 2006.

Since her appointment, Ms. Wilcox has started victim awareness and competency development classes for juvenile probationers. In her new role as director, Ms. Wilcox plans to incorporate the principles of balanced and restorative justice in all phases of juvenile justice in McKean County.

