



# CPUNITY

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

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## Deputy Director's Message

Linda McWilliams

## New CPUnity To Spotlight CP Initiatives

*CSUnity* has been renamed *CPUnity* (Community Programs Unity newsletter) to be more inclusive and highlight the work of all units in the Community Programs Division. Before moving forward, we must pay homage to the staff instrumental in the startup and awesome publications of *CSUnity*.

The *CSUnity* newsletter was created by the Community Transformation Team in 2016 under the guidance of team leader Stephanie Garrison. Comprised of members from various units, the Community Transformation Team was charged, under former DJJ Director Andy Block, with creating a menu of learning and development initiatives around tenets of a learning

(See "Message," page 4)



## JTI Transitions To SLI

After eight cohorts of the Justice Transformation Institute, most of which was taught by Justice System Partners instructors Micheal Collins and John Aarons, the DJJ Training Unit is preparing to continue the tradition of excellence with its new System Leadership Institute (SLI).

"Just as Mike and John made tweaks and upgrades to every JTI cohort, SLI will build on the foundation and structure of JTI and strive for continual improvement," says Leadership Development Training Program Coordinator Benjamin Debord, who is leading the transition effort.



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“We are currently designing a new curriculum from the ground up with an all-star cast of leaders from across the agency.”

Those working with Debord on the new curriculum include April Collins, Autumn Kaufman, Brandy Newton, Christa Galleo, Dee Kirk, Karen Hileman, Jenna Easton, Jerri Jackson, Kelly Rummel, Kevin Heller, Lauren Godspodnetic, Leigh Archer, Rukiya Bellamy, Stephanie Garrison, Tracy King and William Davenport.

Garrison also was instrumental in helping to design the structure of the eight JTI cohorts.

## *200 Graduates Later, John Aarons and Mike Collins Share Final JTI Thoughts*

Our involvement with DJJ began with a request to help write an RFP. Little did we know we'd have the privilege of working with such a strong, dedicated, and courageous group. The vision for JTI began with Stephanie Garrison, with a goal of empowering and equipping the supervisors and managers of DJJ to implement and sustain best practices within the agency. We began working with CSU directors and RPMs to learn more about DJJ, customized the curriculum and began with a super-strong group in JTI Cohort I. And now, some 200 graduates later, we just finished up with the fantastic Elite Eight, with plenty of exceptional groups in the middle.

We appreciate the guidance and support of Ms. Garrison, Mike Morton and Tabitha Young-Osborne, who attended to the details that make something like JTI possible.

Change takes courage. JTI helped to capture strengths and interests already there and provided an opportunity for many folks to bloom in ways to support their units and consequently their juveniles, families and communities.

Maybe the best way to capture the JTI essence is to remember our “isms” (short phrases or sayings which help us recall JTI elements):

- One message, one voice, one DJJ
- Perfection is the enemy of progress
- 4 Times 4 Ways All Day
- Knowledge lives right next door to discomfort



- Leadership development is like planting a tree: The best time is 30 years ago, the second best time is today
- Learn Apply Teach
- Building effective teams includes differences
- Invite and consider preferences and styles
- Courage: rarely, if ever, the easy thing to do
- Get comfortable with discomfort
- Status Quo is the strongest force in organization
- Fail Forward
- Go fast, go alone; go long, go together
- We are DJJ
- Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things
- “It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you into trouble. It’s what you know for sure that just ain’t so.” – Mark Twain
- It is all good till it is not, then it is not good
- It is good to know; it is better to do
- Necessary but not sufficient
- I continue to develop as a manager by reading, reading and more reading
- Intentional leadership, nothing by accident

Thank you for your willingness and courage, and most importantly, your commitment to the mission of juvenile justice as a tool supporting community safety and health. This is a worthy journey, and we are confident the trip is in the best of hands.

*Sincerely,  
John & Mike*







# Get Ready For A SEAS CHANGE

DJJ will implement a new trauma screening tool – Screening for Experience And Strengths (SEAS) – on June 1. The SEAS tool was developed right here in Virginia and is a component of the VA HEALS Trauma-Informed Model of Service Delivery for Children, Youth, and Families.

We understand there may be questions about this new tool and the reason we are adopting it.

Here are the main advantages:

○ Although the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) tool served a valuable purpose by providing an introduction to trauma, SEAS is a more comprehensive tool. It identifies trauma, victimization experiences, exposure to violence, and symptoms in youth.

○ SEAS also identifies protective factors so that our responses can be targeted to utilize and build upon the youth's identified strengths and existing supports.

○ SEAS helps us to recognize and respond to all forms of trauma that our youth experience, enabling us to provide the appropriate services and interventions to prevent youth from further system

involvement.

Any new tool requires some training to help you learn how to use it. The online course entitled “Screening for Experiences and Strengths (SEAS): Trauma Screening Tool and Response Protocol” is your opportunity to learn more about SEAS before it is implemented. In this course, you will learn the why, the how, and the what of SEAS; how it will positively impact the work you do with youth and families; and about the transition plan to move from the ACE to the SEAS.

**IMPORTANT:** For the first wave of required training, we have targeted those staff responsible for the administration of the SEAS (Intake, Probation and Parole Officers, and CSU Supervisors). Note that this training is required for all CSU staff, who must also complete the prerequisite Mandated Reporter training. These sessions must be completed prior to the June 1 implementation date. Click anywhere on this document to register for a training date.

For more information about the SEAS and the Virginia Heals project, go to [www.virginiaheals.com](http://www.virginiaheals.com).

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organization for court service units. The team created the *CSUnity* newsletter to provide CSU staff and all DJJ users with information regarding the Community Programs Division practices, procedures, and operational changes. Michael Morton, Regional Program Manager, was the first editor of the *CSUnity*. In 2019, Vince Butaitis, CSU 15 director, and Natasha Cheek, CSU 15 supervisor, became the editors of the newsletter. They formed an editorial team to suggest, research, and write content for the *CSUnity*.

Special thanks to those who pioneered and contributed in big and small ways to the success of the *CSUnity* newsletter. Special recognition and appreciation for the work of Vince and Natasha who will remain as the editors of the *CPUnity*, and to Kim Jennings, Kevin Heller, Greg Davy and Stephanie Green who will help them. The *CPUnity* will be distributed in May, September and January annually. We want to hear from you. Please share your individual and team initiatives and achievements!



Premiere issue of *CSUnity*,  
September 2016



*At left, the DMV team, clockwise from left: Felicia Downtin-Bailey, Kimberly Rawlins, Judith Atwell. At right, the CSU 4–Norfolk team, clockwise from right: Parole Supervisor John Zamora, Reentry Advocate Kecia Brothers Hayes, Reentry Program Coordinator Melissa Smith, CSU 4 Deputy Director Tim Prioleau.*

# *CSU 4–Norfolk, DMV Partner To Provide IDs*

DJJ’s 4th District Court Service Unit (CSU) in Norfolk recently partnered with DJJ’s Reentry Unit and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles to provide personal identification cards to court-involved youth to help them with employment and their personal needs in the community. The event, held at CSU 4’s Janaf field office, marked the first exclusive partnership between DJJ and the DMV to address this need.

The event was a success and the nine families who participated said they were grateful for the convenience and for the cost-savings provided by DJJ. Youths were able to obtain an ID free of charge, thus removing a barrier for youth and families who may have not had the funds available to cover the standard costs.

DJJ Eastern Region Reentry Advocate Kecia Brothers Hayes planned and coordinated the event, along with the support of CSU 4 staff and Eastern Region Program Manager Michael Morton. Another similar event is planned at the same location on July 25-26 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Youths wishing to participate can make an appointment by contacting Ms. Brothers Hayes at [kecia.brothershayes@djj.virginia.gov](mailto:kecia.brothershayes@djj.virginia.gov).

