



FAMILY MATTERS

A Newsletter For Family Members of DJJ's Clientele

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

Fall 2022

Emerald City A Gem Of An Event

By **PATRICIA BROCK**

Residential Administrative Specialist

Imagine for a moment a diverse group of youth from different parts of Virginia. Some of them have had conflicts in the community, or even with each other where they now live. Some are impulsive and impatient, others demanding and self-centered.

Now picture them running around, cooperating, applauding each other's successes, trusting each other, collaborating to solve problems, overcoming challenges. Welcome to this year's Emerald City Field Day Challenge at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center!

Youth from a cluster calling itself The Emerald City recently joined together for their 4th Field Day Challenge. Planning for the 1½ hour event began two months earlier when the residents were asked which activities they would like to include, who should serve as their leader, and what leadership means. Before the event, the youth participated in a "circle-up" where all the activities were explained, behavioral expectations set, and the importance of teamwork stressed. The day of the event, they participated



in physically and intellectually challenging activities that included blindfold cotton ball pick, water balloon toss, water cup pass, three-legged obstacle course sack race; football toss, "moving on up" cup activity; human Hula Hoop pass, and the cereal box puzzle. Along with these challenges came life lessons in patience, sharing, the importance of planning, strategizing, compliance, and following directions.

Visitation Resumes at Bon Air JCC

We're very pleased to announce that visitation is again available at Bon Air JCC. We welcome visitors every Sunday, either from 8:30-11 a.m. or from 1-3:30 p.m. Up to two visitors at a time will be allowed to attend only one of the two available sessions each week.

Out of an abundance of caution, we will continue to implement COVID-19

precautions during visits, including masking, social distancing, and screening protocols. For more information about these restrictions, please click [HERE](#). The Visitation Rules and Privileges policy is still in effect. To review this policy, click [HERE](#). We and especially our residents look forward to working with you to ensure our visitation events are successful.



The idea for the Emerald City Field Day Challenge was hatched in 2018. Recreation Director Cortez Smith has carried on this activity with the support of multiple staff and youth with special appreciation this year to counselors Ashley Leigers and Ayonia Mitchell, behavioral specialist Evelyn Gonzalez-Ortiz, art instructor Meghan Hamm, PREA manager Lisa Rioux, recreation staff member Moses Haule, residential specialists Tamecia Evans and Catherine Burrell, Yvonne B. Miller High School Principal Dr. Mark Hudson, Jason Zeh, and Assistant Bon Air JCC Superintendent LeKeisha Henry and Rukiya Bellamy.

The PAP: A Recipe For Success

You Can Help Your Child Make Best Plan For His Life

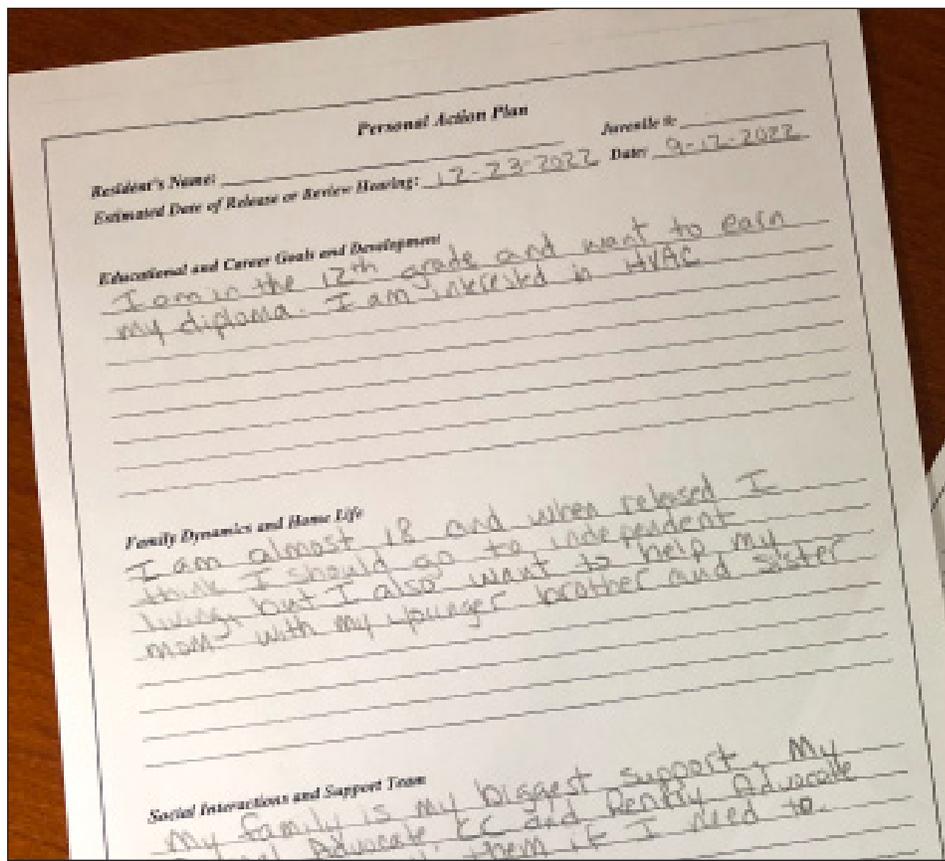
By **PATRICIA BROCK**

Residential Administrative Specialist

If you are excited about learning another way to support/assist your child, read on about the Personal Action Plan (PAP).

The PAP is a document developed by your loved one to guide their personal choices while with DJJ and continues beyond release into the community. Youth assigned to Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center (BAJCC) begin to develop a PAP during Phase I, while youth assigned to an alternative direct care placement, with assistance from a reentry advocate, begin to develop a PAP within the first 30 days of placement. The PAP is an ongoing living document which will likely be modified by youth over time. They write their own goals, with help from staff and peers who encourage them to think openly and freely about their personal goals and what they need to do to achieve them. The PAP helps youth identify the challenges they have faced, the reasons they committed their offense, and ways to prevent reoffending and how to achieve the goals they have set for themselves.

Parents and other supportive adults are critical to this process. Next time you attend Treatment Team or you



see or speak to your loved one, in addition to updating them on what is going on at home, consider talking to them about their PAP. Some questions to ask: Tell me about the goals you set in your PAP? How are they going? Is there anything I can do to help? Showing a genuine interest and a non-judgmental

approach coupled with open-ended questions can encourage them to think through the challenging journey of defining who they are and what they want out of life. To learn more about the PAP, please refer to the Parent Handbook, and/or ask your child or anyone on your child's Treatment Team.

Important Dates Coming Up

Oct 5 : PD Parent Conferences	Dec 19-30: Winter Break (no school)
Oct 7: End of the first quarter	Jan 2: New Year's observed (no school)
Oct 10: Indigenous Peoples' Day (no school)	Jan 13: End of the first semester
Oct 11-14: Fall Intervention	Jan 16: MLK Day (no school)
Nov 8: Election Day (no school)	Jan 17: Teacher Planning (no school)
Nov 11: Veterans Day (no school)	Feb 20: Presidents Day (no school)
Nov 23: Half Day: Thanksgiving	
Nov 24-25: Thanksgiving	

Meet Our Team

In this space, we continue to introduce you to the people on the DJJ team who are working with your children every day, hoping to help make their transition back into the community a successful one.

Probation Officer



Megan Quinn

Megan Quinn is a PO in Prince William. She became interested in working with our kids during her college years, while fulfilling internships and volunteering at various youth agencies. Following her graduation with a bachelor's degree in criminology and social

work in 2020, she joined the DJJ Prince William team.

Megan says she enjoys working with our youth, and can relate to what they are experiencing in their lives. She particularly likes being able to make a change in their lives, and tries to be the positive in their day. Her favorite part of the job is when she gets out of the office and goes where the youth are. She plans to continue the work she has begun, helping and encouraging our youth to become successful. A special quote she shared: "The best view comes after the hardest climb."

Bon Air Staff



Carrie Harris

Carrie Harris is the counselor for Unit 68 at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center. Carrie joined the DJJ family in 2016 as Resident Specialist I, and moved to RS-II in early 2020. She became a counselor later in 2020. Before joining DJJ, Ms. Harris worked

for many years with children at the Boys and Girls Club in her community, and internships during college at Virginia State University. She says the age range in her unit right now can be from 16-20 years, which comes with the challenge of different levels of maturity trying to work together. But it also comes with pluses as the youth learn to help each other. She enjoys working with juveniles, and considers herself an agent of change. "Our interactions offer the youth something they can take into their future," she says.

Carrie plans to stay with DJJ in her current or a related capacity. She is very near achieving her second master's degree, and would like to work in a more clinical aspect. She said much of her inspiration comes from the poem "Don't Quit," by Edgar Albert Guest. Especially the main point "Rest, if you must, but don't you quit."

Education



Katina Poole-Berry

Katina started her career as a teacher in her hometown immediately after completing her undergraduate degree in 1997. She joined Bon Air JCC in 1999 as an educator, and 23 years later, she is still here working with our youth!

In her classroom, where she teaches economics and personal finance, they create their own "utopia." She encourages her students to investigate concepts and ideas, and urges them to use their imagination to dream, discuss and decide, and collaborate. "I teach my students about choices and the consequences of our choices," she says. "I get them to embrace the fact that their past does not define their present, and to change the narrative if they do not like their story.

"My hope is that all my students use what I teach them to make decisions that will improve their lives both financially and personally."



Northern Region Reentry Advocate George Peoples.

Success Story: What Advocacy Is All About

Northern Region Reentry Advocate **George Peoples** shared a recent success story of a resident who entered the system unmotivated and without job skills. With Mr. Peoples' help and encouragement, the resident began to understand the need for employable skills, completed the barber program, along with several other certifications, and graduated while with DJJ.

After the resident was released, George took him to an interview at a business where he had established contacts. He also helped the youth see his own potential, and all the areas he could spotlight that made him a desirable employee. George also obtained a bonding letter for the youth. The youth was hired, based on his skills and presentation. While working that job, the youth was connected with peer-to-peer mentoring and helped to secure a barber position. He chose to keep both jobs, and has proven himself to be a worthy and successful employee.

Reentry Advocates

The Reentry Advocates serve each region to help prepare committed youth for a seamless transition back into the community. Reentry Advocates help with the reentry process by connecting youth to employment services, providing support and assistance in post-secondary and vocational service, linking youth as well as their families to community agencies for services and ensuring youth have identification documents. Their contact information is listed below.



Eastern Region
Kecia Brothers-Hayes
kecia.brothers
@djj.virginia.gov
(804) 972-4148



Central Region
Rowena Callis
rowena.callis
@djj.virginia.gov
(804) 837-6010



Southern Region
Sasha Davenport
sasha.davenport
@djj.virginia.gov
(804) 310-1783



Western Region
Jarrod Davis
jarrod.davis
@djj.virginia.gov
(804) 338-1053



Northern Region
George Peoples
george.peoples
@djj.virginia.gov
(804) 337-8337