



FAMILY MATTERS

A Newsletter For Family Members of DJJ's Clientele

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

Spring 2022

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

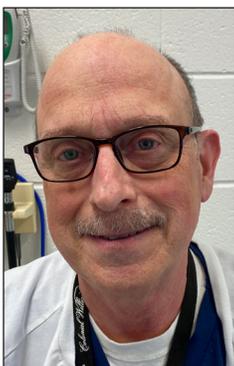


Andrea Carper

Andrea has been a probation officer with the CSU 24 in Lynchburg for nearly 3 years. When she obtained her bachelor's degree, she set her career sights on DJJ. She always wanted to work with juveniles, especially at-risk youth. She believes that

with some time, conversation, and relationship building, and learning about their individual issues and how they think about them, she can help them. She says she is grateful that DJJ offers so much training for her to succeed and advance in her own career. "The kid who needs the most love will ask for it in the most unloving ways," she says. "My favorite part of the job is helping them to succeed."

Medical Staff



Bryan Graham

Bryan is a family nurse practitioner at Bon Air JCC. He served in the Army for six years, then the National Guard for 16 years while getting his education and using it to serve our military. In 2000, he came

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Wellness Backpacks Can Help With Transition To Community

The physical and mental health of the youth we serve continues to be of priority. In an effort to meet the ongoing needs of our youth and families, DJJ collaborates with community organizations to maintain health and wellness as youth transition to the community.

Assisting Families of Inmates (AFOI), one of DJJ's long-term collaborative partners, provides wellness backpacks, giving youth access to resources such as toiletries, hygiene kits, socks, journals, stress balls, blood pressure monitors, pulse ox and thermometers.

DJJ's Reentry Advocates provide the limited number of backpacks to youth on a first-come, as-needed basis. The Reentry Advocates also explain how to use the items and how important they can be to monitoring health. We hope these ongoing partnerships will continue to provide youth with opportunities and resources to meet their basic needs as they return to their communities.

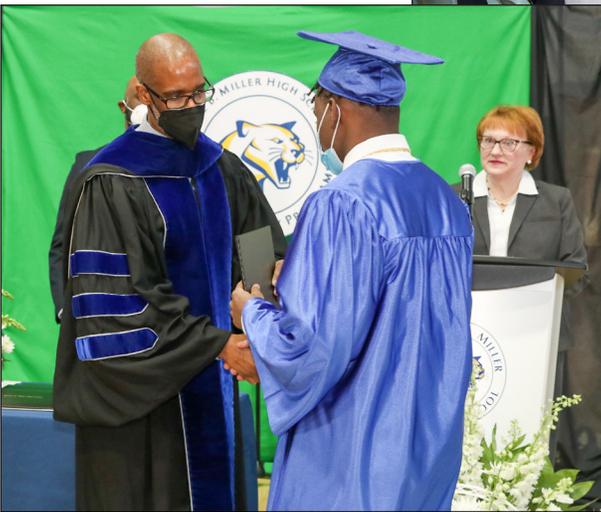


'Family Matters' Now On Facebook

We are pleased to introduce a new "DJJ Family Matters" Facebook page, a social media platform designed specifically with families in mind. You can access this page to receive news, messages and other information of interest. This page will provide information related to agency closings/updates, visitation, family events and other activities within DJJ. Families who activate the appropriate notifications will receive alerts as new information is provided. It is all part of our effort to demonstrate the importance of family involvement in our youths' success.



14 Students Graduate From Miller High School



Above: Dr. Mark Hudson congratulates a graduating resident. Above right: DJJ staff members acknowledge the achievement of 14 graduates.

Yvonne B. Miller High School on the campus of Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center recently celebrated the graduation of 14 students who either completed their GED or earned a high school diploma.

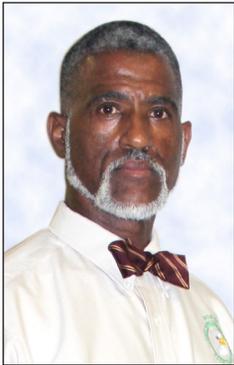
The event was attended by DJJ staff, including DJJ Director Amy Floriano and Dr. Melinda Boone, Deputy Director for Education.

The event itself offered an education opportunity for students learning video production: They recorded the graduation and then edited the video. The class operates in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University.

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to the Virginia DJJ, working as a staff nurse at Culpeper JCC, with the goal of becoming a nurse practitioner, which he attained in 2005. He went on to earn certification as a mental health nurse practitioner, and treats our youth with these issues. Bryan says that working with youth is rewarding because they are amenable to change, and less “set in their ways” than adults might be. He loves it when they start to “get it,” and move toward positive change, so he can celebrate with them. “When the client decides to get it together, succeed in school and move on from the behavior that got them to Bon Air, they become masters of their own destiny,” Graham says.

Education



Richard Pittman

Mr. Pittman started the Junior Cadet Corps program at Bon Air in 2013, the only program that teaches JROTC in a correctional setting. “I enjoy mentoring and counseling the cadet and students at Bon Air, in hopes that it will help motivate them to become better citizens,” he says. “I will continue to work with those students that may have a chance to join the U.S. Armed Forces, by assisting them with taking the ASVAB test.” Pittman describes himself as a “trainer maintainer” who works to develop leaders in his class, to take on roles with their peers to become drill masters and color guard leaders, to name a few. “I’m grateful for the job I have and the impact I’m able to have on the future of the students.”

Resident Advocate

P. Peterson

Over the past five years, Resident Specialist I P. Peterson continues to play a role as an advocate to residents at Bon Air JCC, effectively communicating in a way that they can relate to and teaching them better ways to handle challenging situations. “Taking on this role is almost like being the resident’s temporary



Resident Advocate P. Peterson establishes rapport.

parent,” Ms. Peterson notes. “Making sure they attend school, completing their treatment programs and holding them accountable when they get off task. This also includes talking to teachers, counselors, and sitting on treatment teams where I feel like I’m in a parent/teacher conference to give and receive feedback on resident’s progress.” To be an effective advocate, Peterson says it requires taking the time to build rapport with the resident and give them the support that they need to get back on task. “I genuinely enjoy being an advocate because I can make a positive difference in the youth that we serve,” she says. “I hope that every positive seed that I plant will yield a harvest, in that the residents are able to return home to their families a better person. As staff this is our ultimate goal.”

Family Feedback

“If my child had to be incarcerated, at least it was at Bon Air where he got so much of what he needed. I can be grateful for that.”

Resident Feedback

“I’m glad we have no COVID cases right now.”

“The food is improving.”

“The school I’m taking is giving me opportunities for success.”

“It’s great that the Student Government Association is back: It helps with leadership.”