

ORLEANS JUVENILE JUSTICE TODAY



A Publication of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court

A Message from the Chief Judge



On behalf of the Judges and Staff of OPJC, thank you for a productive 2017 year. We initiated new programs and made some great achievements. Most importantly, we provided quarterly publications to update you on court news and activities. OPJC's newly titled publication, *Orleans Juvenile Justice Today (OJTT)* will bring you more quality news for 2018.

This edition highlights some exciting news from 2017 to include success stories of two youth, and the tremendous impact our court programs have made on their lives.

For more information regarding contributions to the OJTT newsletter, you may contact thbrown@nola.gov.

Enjoy the stories and The **OJTT** newsletter is one way the court shares important news. The community is invited to submit stories that can be shared in upcoming editions.

Thank you in advance for your interest. We hope you enjoy *Orleans Juvenile Justice Today*.

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Raising the Bar of Success

As I approach the court room, I see a tall young man, poised, confident, and intelligent. Sixteen year-old Devanti D., is starting a new chapter in his life. A chapter of determination, persistence, and most importantly... success! Devanti entered the juvenile justice system at fourteen. He served in the Youth Study Center for nine months and served three months at Bridge City. Before we began the interview, I noticed Devante was very humble and comfortable. I appreciated his honesty about his history. He was very confident, open and honest.

Q: Why did you enter the Youth Study Center?

A: *"I entered the YSC at 14 years old. When I entered, I had many behavioral problems. I would purposely get into fights and disrespect the staff. After I got tired of doing this, I realized the seriousness of my situation. By age fifteen years old, I changed and I worked with staff and school teachers, respecting, listening and following directions. I realize that this is what I have to do to get out of here."*



Devanti poses with Chief Judge, Candice B. Anderson

Q: How did the staff help you with your behavior and other areas?

A: *"The teachers were understanding and wanted to help me transition, because they realized I was serious. I felt they understood what I was feeling."*

Q: What happened after you left the YSC?

A: *"I went to Bridge City for the last three months of my sentence. I continued to progress, but there were a few bumps in between because of the environment I was in. Not by choice, but I was forced into a physical altercation where they wanted you to prove yourself. I knew how to avoid the situation by staying by myself and doing things to keep me occupied and on track. I would read books. I was too young to take classes for trade. So I would do things on my own like clean-up and read books."*

Q: What types of books did you read or which you most admired?

A: *"One book I read that helped me while in detention was, "Malcolm X." That book kept my mind occupied."*

Q: What happened after you left Bridge City?

A: *"After I left Bridge City, I still had one year probation. I avoided certain situations, I changed my crowd and started working with my Dad learning diesel mechanics. With my family and mentors, I stayed on the right track. They kept me motivated to do right and make them proud."*

Q: What are your plans now?

A: *"Now that I'm off probation, I want to finish high school and go to an HBCU and major in Economics and attend law school after I graduate. Once I become a lawyer, I want to give back to the younger children in the community."*

Q: If you could give advice to someone going through the same thing as you, what would you tell them?

A: *I would tell them one thing, "Know there is still light at the end of the tunnel."*

Devanti is currently attending high school and continues to work with his Dad.

OPJC Provides Tools for Success

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court's alternative to detention programs offer a second chance for youth committing delinquent offenses. One young man embraced that chance and became a success story.

Kennell Parker was ordered to Orleans Detention Alternative Program, a pre-adjudication alternative to detention program that seeks to ensure youth will return for court appearances and not re-offend. While maintaining a positive status in ODAP, Kennell attended the Men Engaging in Leadership and Opportunity Works (MELOW) program, a male youth program that assists at-risk youth with mentoring while providing an educational and social, curriculum. While enrolled in MELOW, Kennell did very well.

He participated and contributed in the creation of "*NOLA Youth Speaks*," a documentary consisting of young men having dialogue about their experiences.

Kennell's contribution to the documentary was so remarkable, that quotes from the dialogue will be featured in the *New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board Resource Guide*. Once Kennell graduated from MELOW, he was so inspired by the program that he wanted to give back and now serves as a youth mentor.

As of today, Kennel is still active in the ODAP program, and continues to thrive in many areas. For one, Kennell has not recidivated and has been fully compliant with all curfew calls and scheduled visits. Secondly, Kennell was enrolled in school as an eighth grade student, but has now accelerated to the 9th grade

due to his high achievement on Advanced/Mastery test scores. Because of this achievement, he now attends Eleanor McMain Secondary Senior High School.

Kennell is an excellent example of how important an evidence based alternative programs are in the juvenile court system. A second chance at life with commitment to change is Kennell's mission. His mother Ms. Bianca Parker (mother) states, "*I have been so worried that my child got himself into this kind of trouble, Kennell is the oldest of nine children. I have never ever had any problems with Kennell. As a single parent, Kennell is my strength, he helps his younger brothers and sisters all of the time.*" Through the court's partnership with Best Buy, Kennell has been rewarded with a new laptop computer to assist with school studies and homework.

His mother is very proud of his accomplishments. Using the knowledge gained from ODAP, MELOW, and Integrated Family Services (Fredrick Walker, Jr.), Kennell continues to emerge as a leader in both his community and at school. According to his mentors, Kennell has always displayed self-respect and a deep respect for others, including Juvenile Court staff as well as with the Administrators at his school.

Kennell would like to attend Louisiana State University and major in Engineering. He also wants to be a soaring Tiger and play football with future aspirations of being drafted into the National Football League. OPJC's programs give a promising future to youth like Kennell. Chief Judge Anderson, states, *"This is why we need to continue to offer alternative programming in our court."*

As a court, we want to offer programs that will assist our children with the best possible outcomes. Mentoring and educational needs is a priority to success. OPJC's goal is to improve the lives of youth and families that we serve." (Judge Candice B. Anderson, Chief Judge, OPJC)



Pictured from left to right: Bianca Parker (parent), Dashika Davis, ODAP Program Director, Chief Judge Candice Bates Anderson, Kennell Parker, and Willie Morgan, MELOW Program Coordinator.



Contributing Writer,
Dashika R. Davis, M.A.C.J., MHP
Program Director, Orleans Detention Alternative Program (ODAP)



What is the New Orleans CYPB anyway?

By Karen Evans,
CYPB Executive Director

Sometimes it's easier to understand what something is by knowing what it is not.

- CYPB is not a program or service; it does not deliver programs or services of any kind
- CYPB is not a funding entity; it issues no grants and gives no funding to any other entities
- The State of LA does not fund; NOLA CYPB has never received funding from the state of Louisiana, it is an unfunded state mandate.
- CYPB is not funded by the Juvenile Justice System of Orleans Parish; NOLA CYPB has never received funding from OPJC.

So, what is the New Orleans CYPB anyway?

The New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board (CYPB) is a board of not more than **25** members, appointed by the City Council, with 1 full time staff, in position to fulfil the purpose and function as outlined in the State legislation and the City ordinance. Find the full legislation and ordinance on the CYPB website at www.nolacypb.org.

The *CYPB exists to create, implement, and monitor a comprehensive plan* for the services and programs that best respond to the demonstrated needs of children and youth in Orleans Parish.

The Board is intended to encourage collaborative efforts among local stakeholders in assessing the physical, social, emotional, developmental, behavioral, educational, safety and poverty impacts and needs of children and youth in their respective communities, and to assist the board in the development of comprehensive plans to address such needs.

The comprehensive plan will promote:

- development, implementation and operation of services which encourage positive youth development
- diversion of children and youth from criminal justice and foster care systems
- reduction in the commitments of youth to state institutions
- provision of a community response to the rate of juvenile delinquency

The CYPB is designed and intended to be a **planning board...planning with the end in mind:**

Well-being, Safety, and Permanency for the children and youth of Orleans Parish.



Be well,
Karen Evans
Karen Evans
Executive Director

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court

Conferences and Trainings

Racial Justice Improvement Task Force Deflection Program & Implicit Bias Training



Orleans Parish Juvenile Court hosted the *Juvenile Deflection Program & Implicit Bias Training* in November at the Supreme Courthouse downtown. This training

Orleans Parish was coordinated under OPJC's School Justice Partnership Initiative as part of the Racial Justice Improvement Project. Judge Steven of Clayton County, Georgia was one of many who presented at the training. He is the architect of School-Justice Partnership in Clayton that has successfully grown to 39 states across the country. Other presenters were experts from the Sentencing Project of Washington, D.C. and representatives from the American Bar Association Criminal Justice Section. Task Force members included Chief Judge Candice B. Anderson, Michael Harrison, Chief of Police, Henderson Lewis, Superintendent of OPSB; and many others community leaders who work diligently to reduce the number of kids entering the Juvenile Justice System by way of school-based arrest. According to Chief Judge Anderson, *"building a sustainable partnership between the education, justice, and law enforcement systems in New Orleans is our mission to the School Justice Partnership and it will take a village of leaders, including yourself, to reduce the number of kids entering the juvenile and criminal justice systems."*



STAFF DEVELOPMENT HIGHLIGHTS

Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES



Family In Need of Services Series: (L to R) Janelle Temple, Judge Mark Doherty (OPJC), Damekia Morgan, JDAI Coordinator, and Lynette Adams, FINS Supervisor, LA Supreme Court.



"Substance Abuse: What's Happening with the Teen Population in New Orleans" presenters: Judge Desiree Cook-Calvin and representatives from Odyssey House.

OPJC Staff Earn CEU's through Staff Development Trainings



"Trauma Informed Care" – Dr. Torin Sanders, LCSW – Dr. Sanders presented current research about trauma-informed treatment services for children and youth with complex mental health needs that can reduce the severity of, and/or remedy the mental, social and behavioral challenges of children and youth.



The Principles of Staffing Cases by Dr. Martin Drell - Dr. Drell gave an in-depth presentation on the importance of case staffing to OPJC staff. Dr. Drell is the Carl Adatto Professor of Community Psychiatry and Head of the Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychiatry. His interests include on infant and toddler psychiatry, temper tantrums and behavior disorders in young children.

The Impact of OPJC's Youth Programs

Girls Reaching Out Works Wonders (G.R.O.W.W.)

GROWW is an alternative to detention and intervention program that provides a curriculum designed to encourage the acquisition of greater, knowledge, and understanding and encourage self-esteem and discipline. Since GROWW's inception, May, 2015, it has made significant differences in the lives of the young women involved. Before the program the recidivism rate was at 30%. Since OPJC has instituted the gender specific program, our recidivism rate has decreased to 0%. Our "failure to appear" rate has decreased from 29% to 0%. GROWW has a robust curriculum designed to encourage the acquisition of greater, knowledge, understanding, and insight and has instituted many curricular activities such as: "**Believe in Youth**" - Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies (IWES); **R.E.A.L. Choices** – Eden House; "Sisters Saving Sisters" – **Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast, Incorporated**; and an Awarding Author, Success Coach & Leadership Consultant – Havilah Malone, "**Leading Ladies to Win**": 5 Steps to Increased Confidence & Unleashing Your Voice. Because GROWW is an evidenced based program, it is now involved in the NOLA-Youth Program Quality Initiative, a program designed to engage a cohort of organizations in using national research and best practices to develop a localized model for improving the quality of programs serving children and youth. The success of the GROWW program has been recognized by the Baton Rouge Juvenile Court who has made inquiry of how to replicate GROWW in the juvenile court of Baton Rouge.



MEN ENGAGING IN LEADERSHIP AND OPPORTUNITY WORKS

The MELOW Program has had a tremendous impact at Juvenile Court as well as within the City of New Orleans. Since the program's inception in April 2017, the program has held at capacity continuously while the waiting list continues to grow. To date, MELOW have serviced over 60 at-risk male youth while receiving nearly 300 referrals with 2 months remaining before the program's one year anniversary. With the implement of gender specific programs such as MELOW and GROWW, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court re-arrest rate has declined from 30% to 18%. MELOW has 98.3% appear rate with only one youth missing a court hearing. The MELOW program has offered youth opportunities to experience community events and initiatives such as, the "Cash for News" initiative where group members engaged in local and national news stories. In addition, the New Orleans Children and Youth Planning Board assisted provided an opportunity for participants to create a documentary, titled: "NOLA Youth Speaks." Participants received a tour of a local studio where they learned Audio Engineering. Lastly, with a notable partnership with Phyllis Wheatley Charter, school administrators are interested in modeling the MELOW program for its students. The goal of MELOW is to provide a safe and structured environment, offer individual and group counseling services, and incorporate a strong program curriculum that provide lessons on effective communication, emotional awareness, and building confidence. (*Curriculum provided by the "Change for the Better Community Based Curriculum" by Frederick Walker, Jr., LMSW*).



Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Announcements

Clayton County, Georgia Site Visit

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court staff and members of the Racial Justice Improvement Task Force attended a site visit in Clayton County, Georgia. The purpose of the visit was to observe first-hand how the School Justice Partnership system works in the Clayton County and meet with its administrators regarding start-up processes. OPJC will soon confirm a School-Justice Partnership agreement with the New Orleans School Board and New Orleans Police Department. Among the attendees at the site visit was Judge Desiree Cook-Calvin, OPJC, Ranord J. Darensburg, OPJC Judicial Administrator, Karen Evans, Children Youth & Planning Board, Kristina Kent, Orleans Parish School Board, and Damekia Morgan, OPJC JDAI Coordinator.



Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Judges and Staff Salutes

The Honorable Ernestine S. Gray

2018 Recipient of the

American Bar Foundation Outstanding Service Award



Highlighted Events

Racial Justice Improvement Project's School-Justice Partnership Conversation and Training



Chief Judge Candice Bates Anderson is pictured with Judge Steven Teske and his Technical Assistance Team during two-day training.

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court's Staff under the Racial Justice Improvement Project Initiative hosted a *School-Justice Partnership Conversation & Training* event, February 27th and 28th. This two-day training session focused on *Dismantling the School-to-Prison Pipeline* through the development of a School-Justice Partnership. Judge Steven Teske, and his team of experts discussed the development of a school-justice model for Orleans parish with several community leaders in attendance and offered tools for its development. The training included a School-Justice initiative Panelist, which consisted of the following community leaders: *Stella Cziment, Director of Enrollment Transitions, Recovery School District (RSD), Ranord. J. Darensburg, Judicial Administrator of Orleans Parish Juvenile, Councilmember Nadine M. Ramsey, City of New Orleans, Councilmember District "C", Damekia Morgan, LMSW, JDAI Coordinator, OPJC, and Gina Womack, Executive Director, Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC).*



Judge Steven Teske
School-Justice Partnership Model



Councilmember
Nadine M. Ramsey, District C



Capt. Marc Richards
Model of School Policing

ORLEANS PARISH JUVENILE COURT JUDGE'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EVENTS



The Honorable Candice B. Anderson held a *Links Day* event for students from McDonogh 35 High School. The young ladies received a presentation on *Human Trafficking and Know Your Rights training*. Volunteers participated in a Mock trial. Of course, the most delightful highlight was meeting Suzie, OPJC's courthouse dog. The Links, Inc. Pontchartrain Chapter is an international, not-for-profit corporation, established in 1946. It is one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer service organizations of extraordinary women who are committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the culture and economic survival of African Americas and other persons of African ancestry.



THE SHERO NETWORK

Judge Desiree Cook-Calvin spearheaded a community event at Orleans Parish Juvenile Court through the Shero Network. Young women visited the court to learn about court processes and operations. The Shero Network is a conduit of empowerment inspiration and revival for everyday women who want to make a difference in the world. Tara Alexander is the Founder/Executive Director of The Shero Network.



UPCOMING MEETINGS AND TRAININGS



Trauma Informed Care with Dr. Torin Sanders, LCSW

Friday, March 9, 2018, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Presentation of the current information and research about trauma-informed treatment services for children and youth with complex mental health needs.

Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative Collaborative Upcoming Committee Meetings

Conditions of Confinement Committee, Tuesday, March 13, 3pm – 4pm; Case Processing Committee, Wednesday, March 7th 10am – 11am; ATD Committee, Wednesday, March 21st 10am – 11:30am; RED Committee, TBD; RAI Committee, Thursday, April 5th, 10am – 11am; Data Committee, Friday, April 20th 10am – 11am; JDAI Lunch and Learn, April 2018 – TBD; First Quarter Collaborative Meeting, Wednesday, March 28th 1pm – 3pm.

All meetings are held in the OPJC Training Center at 1100 Milton Street. For future meeting dates you may contact Damekia Morgan, JDAI Coordinator at (504) 658-9553.

March is National Women's History Month



The National Women's History Project recognizes and celebrates the diverse and historic accomplishment of women by providing informational services, and educational and promotional materials. Recognizing the achievements of women in all facets of life – scientists, community, government, literature, art, sports, and medicine – has a huge impact on the development of self-respect and new opportunities for girls and young women. The 2018 Theme for National Women's History Month is *"Nevertheless, She Persisted: Honoring Women Who Fight All Forms of Discrimination Against Women."*

For more information, you may visit www.nwhp.org.

Quick Quiz: Who was the first black woman lawyer in the United States and the first woman admitted to District of Columbia Bar in 1872?

Charlotte Ray (1850-1911)

GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Receives Funding for the C.L.E.A.R. Program

“Complete Legal Expungement of Arrests and Records”



Orleans Parish Juvenile Court was just awarded a grant for the C.L.E.A.R. Program (*Complete Legal Expungement of Arrests and Records*) from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. C.L.E.A.R. is an expungement program to assist adults and juveniles with the expungement of juvenile records. Under new Louisiana expungement law, individuals may have their juvenile record expunged if eligible.

OPJC will soon host a community expungement clinic. More information will be forthcoming via OPJC’s website at www.nola.gov/juvenile-court.

Many thanks to all who contributed in making this grant program possible and a special thank you to our C.L.E.A.R. partners: Southeast Louisiana Legal Services, Volunteers of America, and Justice & Accountability Center of Louisiana.

For more information concerning the new expungement law please visit <https://www.nola.gov/juvenile-court/forms/forms-files/expungement-form/>. Expungement laws of juvenile records reference (La. Ch. C Arts. 917-926).

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EVENTS



Human Trafficking Awareness Month

The Staff of Orleans Parish Juvenile Court wore blue to bring awareness for Human Trafficking for the month of January. Judge Candice Bates-Anderson, Staff and Suzie pose for a picture in front of the Juvenile Justice Center.



Congratulations to Suzie and the OPJC Staff who were invited to participate in this year's Barkus Parade. Suzie's themed float was a "Dragon." Judge Mark Doherty and Kimberly Beshears from OPJC representative at the event. Both send thanks to all who supported this event.

