

Connect

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016

- 2 Director's Corner
- 4 NOVA Roundtable
Convenes Around
Fatherhood Services
Substance Abuse
Services Recognized
- 5 Learning About
Immigrant and
Refugee
Experience
- 6 City Says Thanks
DCHS Star Awards
- 7 DCHS Center
Profile: CAS
- 8 DCHS Task Forces
and Committees
- 10 Hello & Goodbye
- 12 News You Can Use

Going to Extremes for Kids

Jonah* and Daniel* are similar to most Alexandria teenagers. Jonah is an outgoing and inquisitive 13-year-old. Twelve-year-old Daniel is quiet, thoughtful and bright. Both boys love basketball, football and fishing. Unlike most teens, however, both Daniel and Jonah are in foster care.

Teenagers in foster care like Daniel and Jonah are at high risk for aging out of the foster care system without the needed relationships, support or resources to meet the challenges of adult life, putting them at risk for homelessness, poverty, substance abuse and mental health issues.

To intensify efforts to find adoptive homes and build brighter futures for Daniel and Jonah, DCHS Child Welfare staff recently partnered with the Extreme Recruitment program managed by United Methodist Family Services (UMFS).

Extreme Recruitment is an innovative program to find permanency for youth using 12 to 20 weeks of intensive recruitment efforts when all other alternatives have been exhausted. It works exclusively with



EXTREME RECRUITMENT

A HOME FOR EVERY CHILD

**Names have been changed to protect privacy.*

Continued on page 3



Fiscal Year 2017 Budget



DCMS Director Kate Garvey

The City Manager released the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget on February 23. With revenue growing at a slower rate than expenditures, reductions in the budget were necessary. The original reduction goal for DCMS was five percent, the equivalent of almost \$2.5 million. The Leadership Team worked hard to make decisions that would have the least negative impact on our clients and the organization.

The approach that was adopted for reductions utilized the following criteria. We would consider reductions in areas where:

- There would be no immediate impact on the safety of clients
- Other service alternatives exist
- The service is not mandated
- The service or function was primarily city funded
- Current vacancies exist
- Imbalance in staffing ratios or needs are present

The Leadership Team and managers also worked hard to find ways to identify alternative sources of funding to replace current City general

fund dollars, as well as generate and maximize our revenue and find efficiencies. Even with these approaches, we are faced with reductions in positions and services.

As you will see in the budget, however, our reductions are actually closer to 2.5 percent. We are grateful that we were not required to reduce the DCMS budget by the full five percent.

It is never easy to face reductions, particularly as we have had a long period of budget losses and the impact can be cumulative. It is important that we continue to monitor the impact of reductions and make adjustments to our approaches when it is necessary. We will work with all the teams and staff who are affected by the reductions to try to mitigate the impact, as well as explore other resources and methods to address the work demands.

The financial and resource challenges we face require us to be creative and to continue to work through our many partnerships to assure that our safety net of services

and supports remains strong and stable. The commitment shown by DCMS staff through the many years of financial ups and downs has been tremendous, and I am thankful for your continued resolve and strength.

There are many opportunities to learn more about the budget and provide feedback to the City Manager. He is holding employee Town Hall meetings throughout the City for just this purpose. The schedule is posted on AlexNet. The City Council will deliberate on the budget and hold hearings throughout the months of March and April. The final budget will be adopted on May 5. 🌱

Going to Extremes for Kids

FROM PAGE 1

The program utilizes all forms of adoption recruitment—from placement in national adoption registries to private investigators conducting searches to reconnect children with kin—on a stepped up timeline.

the hardest to place children: those ages 10 to 18 years old, sibling groups, children of minority status and youth with emotional, developmental or behavioral challenges.

The program utilizes all forms of adoption recruitment—from placement in national adoption registries to private investigators conducting searches to reconnect children with kin—on a stepped up timeline.

The program was founded in 2008 by Melanie Scheetz, the Executive Director of the Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition in Missouri. It started small, only serving a handful of children initially. With experience and success—the program now matches 70 percent of youth with an adoptive family—it grew and spread to other agencies and organizations across the country.

When DCMS Social Worker Michele Mintling learned that UMFS received a grant to start an Extreme Recruitment program in Northern Virginia, she immediately contacted UMFS NOVA Regional Center Program Director Laura Giunta.

UMFS, a non-profit social services organization committed to permanency for kids, employs a full time recruiter and a private investigator, who handle about 15 cases a year.

“Extreme Recruitment is an intensive process to find family members,” says Giunta.

The recruiter and private investigator do everything from pulling records and searching databases to attending family reunions and visiting parents’ extended family to fill in the child’s back story and find connections the child may not know about.

“It’s really about developing the connections,” says Giunta. “We’ve developed an average of 80 contacts in a youth’s life, and we are getting kids placed in permanent placements from those connections.”

Permanent placement isn’t the only goal, however.

“The other goal is to connect youths to their people,” says Giunta, “so they can say, ‘This is who my family is, this is who I am connected to.’”

The program is a huge commitment for the child’s social workers, requiring weekly, intensive meetings between the child’s professional team members. “It’s a lot to ask a social worker to be available every week,” says Giunta.

It was a commitment Mintling and Child Welfare staff considered carefully.

“We really researched and learned about the

process,” says Mintling. “Then we asked ourselves if we could commit. We decided, yes.”

Daniel and Jonah’s social workers went through the application and referral process for the boys, and both were accepted, with the process starting for Daniel in December and Jonah in January.

Mintling quickly saw the difference the program makes in recruitment efforts.

“Just a few weeks in, we uncovered some relatives for both boys that we didn’t know about,” she said. The process also prompted a conversation with Jonah’s foster family to see if they would be willing to be an adoptive family. “The process really forces conversations to happen.”

Mintling is impressed by the program’s intensive investigation, too.

“This program adds an extra layer to the work we are already doing,” says Mintling. “The private investigator has access to databases and unique approaches that social workers don’t have the time or training to do.”

Mintling also says UMFS brings a fresh perspective to finding homes for the boys, both of whom have been in foster care for years.

“They don’t know these kids, and they are able to look at things in a different way and come up with things that we haven’t tried,” says Mintling.

Even if relatives don’t become adoptive families, Mintling agrees with Giunta that the boys come out ahead.

“They come out of the process with connections and relationships that can be a support to them,” she says.

Her experience has Mintling thinking about how the program’s model could impact the way social service agencies pursue adoption in general.

“It makes me wonder what we could do if we had the resources to do this kind of intensive work when children first come into care, if we had a team like this in the very beginning,” Mintling muses. “But it would have to be a dedicated team of people for whom that was their only job.”

In the meantime, Mintling feels positive about the outcomes for Daniel and Jonah as well as the support and resources the program can bring to other children like them.

“Anytime we have a kid who meets the criteria,” says Mintling, “we will make the referral.” 🌱



NOVA Roundtable Convenes Around Fatherhood Services

On January 14, DCHS and neighboring county child welfare staff interested in advancing the emerging practice of fatherhood services convened the first meeting of the Northern Virginia Fatherhood Round Table. DCHS invited representatives from Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties.

The Round Table is exploring strategies to address complex fatherhood dynamics so that social services systems can come together to better understand the challenges and restore the critical supportive roles men play in their families and communities.

Child-welfare involved fathers face a number of challenges. The National Fatherhood Initiative, a nonprofit organization founded in 1994 to improve the well-being of children by increasing the involvement of responsible and

committed fathers, has raised awareness of how social systems intended to help fathers can create barriers for them in achieving self-sufficiency and supporting their families. The complex immigration system, inaccessibility of mental health services, an overburdened legal system, unattainable child support mandates, a child welfare system traditionally focused on mothers as caregivers and unconscious gender bias are some of the barriers fathers face.

Other significant factors include the lack of living wage employment opportunities

and limited social supports (family and friends), lack of spiritual guidance, adverse childhood experiences and lack of role models for fatherhood and parenting. It is not uncommon for some child welfare involved fathers to be lacking in the

areas of self-esteem, communication skills, parenting skills, maturity and personal social skills.

Despite these challenging realities, the vast majority of dads want better lives for their children.

They hope for systems that will listen to their stories and support and guide them in reaching their



Champanna Bernard (Fairfax), Derwin Overton (Prince William), Anita Martineau (Alexandria), Emery Jefferies (Alexandria), Harrison Grant (Alexandria), Elias Manrique (Arlington), Jon Rayle (Arlington), Renisha Weston (Arlington).



dreams for their children and families. This requires fathers, community members and social service agencies to be open to self-reflection, collaboration and adaptation.

“Engaging dads is the right thing to do,” says DCHS Fatherhood Coordinator Emery Jefferies, “and it’s in the ultimate best interest of the children we are tasked to serve.”

The January 14 meeting focused on getting to know one another, understanding the challenges and learning about the current status of fatherhood program development in the participating jurisdictions. Each agency is constructing approaches that are responsive to their community’s needs.

Some are farther along than others, but all expressed great enthusiasm to continue the journey together. *~by Family Engagement Unit Supervisor Anita Martineau*

Learning About Immigrant & Refugee Experiences

One in nine Virginians were born outside the United States—and Northern Virginia is home to 70 percent of this population.

DCHS staff learned about the experiences of immigrants and refugees in Northern Virginia during two Lunch and Learns hosted by the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee on February 1 and 3.

During a short presentation, committee member Carmen Andres highlighted the challenges and issues immigrants and refugees face as they leave their country of origin and settle in the United States. As immigrants and refugees try to adjust to new and unfamiliar environments, many struggle with underemployment or unemployment, insecure housing, language barriers, gender roles and status adjustment, and difficulties accessing education and health care. In addition, many face challenges like having to choose between focusing on getting a job or studying English as well as whether to use their resources to pay off debts or support family members they left behind.

Some also struggle with past torture or trauma. They may have witnessed a loved one being hurt, attacked or murdered, or may have been tortured or injured themselves. Many refugees were forced to leave their homes and undertake perilous journeys in search of sanctuary, experiencing extreme deprivation and prolonged periods of limbo.

These challenges and issues can lead to emotional and psychological struggles such as anxiety, fear, loss of trust, survivor’s guilt and hopelessness.

Staff also watched a short video, *What Would You Do?* The video challenges people to consider the risks refugees take in or-



DCHS and City staff shared their experiences as immigrants and refugees. Left to right: Khadija Barqadle (Child Welfare Services), Arathi Krishnendra (CWS), Namina Kamara (Parent Infant Education) and Smail Farid (City IT).

der to reach a safe location. Participants then spent time discussing what their own responses would be if they were refugees.

Attendees also heard stories and experiences from a panel of staff who are immigrants or refugees or who work closely with those populations. On February 1 at 4480 King Street, panelists included Margaret Dhillon (Child Welfare Services), Ashunta May (Workforce Development Center), Smail Farid (City IT), Savannah Ferter (CWS) and Namina Kamara (Parent Infant Education). On February 3 at 2525 Mount Vernon, Dhillon, Farid and Kamara were joined by Julio Baurto (CWS), Raphael Obenwa (Finance Services), Arathi Krishnendra (CWS) and Khadija Barqadle (CWS).

If you would like to learn more about the refugee and immigrant experience, visit the [CLCC SharePoint page](#) for resources including immigrant and refugee stories, information about immigrant and refugee populations in Alexandria and how to work more effectively with these client populations. *~*

Substance Abuse Services Recognized

The Substance Abuse Center received national recognition from the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) Program for its role in the Alexandria Treatment/Criminal Justice Initiative.

Administration and staff of the initiative were recognized at a banquet on February 18 for their services and commit-

ment to doing everything they can to help those with drug addiction.

The initiative, a partnership between the Alexandria Community Services Board and Alexandria Probation and Parole, coordinates a system of supervision and addiction treatment services to disrupt the demand for illegal drugs by

Substance Abuse Services - continued from page 4

intervening with the offender population and reducing recidivism of hard core offenders with criminal histories related to addiction.

Probation officers and Alexandria’s HIDTA coordinator work together to identify clients for treatment at the Alexandria Substance Abuse Center, which provides a full continuum of services including medically assisted detox, a 30-day residential Detox treatment program, therapy

and other outpatient services.

“Nowhere else in the W/B HIDTA region is there a more comprehensive substance abuse treatment center,” says HIDTA Associate Deputy Director Ruth Phillips, who nominated the initiative for the award.

HIDTA is a federal program that provides assistance to law enforcement agencies operating in areas determined to be critical drug trafficking regions of the United States. *~*



Liz Wixson (DCHS), Susan Tatum (DCHS), Lilly Draney (DCHS), Vinod Dilawari (DCHS), Aminah Mellion (DCHS), Ruth Phillips (Washington/Baltimore HIDTA), Kim Burson (DCHS), Jennifer Male (Virginia Probation/Alexandria Office) and Lisa Stapleton (Virginia Probation/Alexandria Office).



Watch a three minute video that asks viewers [What Would You Do?](#) if you were in the position of an asylum seeker, fearing for your life and the lives of your family.



DCHS Star Awards

The DCHS Stars Award Program gives staff the opportunity to acknowledge and recognize significant employee contributions in two ways. The Star Awards are given once a month and designed to recognize an individual whose action was significant to another employee. Five nominees receive a \$25 gift card. The Super Star Awards are designed to recognize an individual or group whose action was outside normal work expectations and had a significant impact on internal or external DCHS customers or departmental operations. These awards are given twice a year to two individuals for \$500 each and one group award of \$500. Nominees and winners will be recognized during a late March breakfast celebration and the DCHS picnic in September.

December Star Nominees

Zenobia Russ, Yolanda Rivera, Tamara Carter, Norma Sanchez, Margaret Dhillon, LaShon Joseph, Johnnie Sumlin, Iris Melendez, Fernando Perez-Lee, Elizabeth San Pedro, Dena Wilson, Becky Tavenner, Betsy Hiers, Avis Hunter

December Super Star Nominees

None nominated

November \$25 Gift Card Drawing Star Award Winners

Diana Tracey, Jenny Mendoza, Petrina Cummings, Cathy Bartholomew, Lorena Villatoro

December \$25 Gift Card Drawing

Erycka Reid, Celestine Chew, Jacqueline Juarez, Becky Tavenner, Elizabeth San Pedro

Nominate an individual online for a [Star Award](#).
Nominate an individual or group online for a [Super Star Award](#).

January Star Nominees

Tara Millington, Jennifer Miller, Vicky Diggs, Lisette Torres

January Super Star Nominees

None nominated

January \$25 Gift Card Drawing Star Award Winners

Jennifer Miller, Avis Hunter, Mayra Espinoza, Edwards Byers and Fernando Perez-Lee

City Says Thanks

Two DCHS staff were awarded the City's Just Say Thanks Award, which recognizes City employees who work "above and beyond" expectations and affirms the extraordinary effort, dedication and productivity exhibited by the City of Alexandria workforce.

Each was selected by City Manager Mark Jinks for the monthly award, which includes a \$100 VISA gift card and a letter from Jinks thanking them for their service.

Berline Lewis, Director of Intellectual Disability Residential Services, was nominated by Margaretrose Odigwe for her dedication and her 24-hour-a-day availability.

Odigwe noted Lewis for availability to clients and staff to answer questions and solve problems, "helping in any way possible to make the work environment easy and enjoyable."

Betty Sewell, a Job Readiness instructor with the Workforce Development Center, was nominated by a colleague for her contributions to the creation and growth of the Center's Career Readiness Workshops. Relying on her skills as a former college instructor, Sewell researched best practices, visited regional one-stops, consulted workforce development professionals and secured subject matter experts, resulting in 11 workshops ranging from "How to Land a Job" to "Creating a LinkedIn Profile" The workshops have since grown to 18 with an average attendance of six participants for each session. 🌱



SPECIAL SERIES DCHS CENTER PROFILES

Over four issues, Connect will highlight the services and programs of each center in DCHS. While it is not a comprehensive list of all services and programs, we hope it will be helpful to you as a DCHS staff member.

ADULT SERVICES | CHILD SERVICES | ECONOMIC SUPPORT | ADMIN/OPERATIONS

CENTER FOR ADULT SERVICES

AGING & ADULT SERVICES

Aging and Adult Services

Providing a wide range of services to seniors and adults with disabilities and their caregivers with special emphasis given to those who have a low income and are most at risk of being institutionalized, including transportation to medical appointments and grocery store, discount taxi fares for older adults, financial assistance, housing programs, insurance and long term care counseling for seniors, in home assistance for seniors and adults with severe disabilities, nutrition and health resources, legal services and information and referral services. 703.746.5999.

Adult Day Services Center

Services to seniors 55 years and older who may need assistance and who may not want or cannot stay at home alone during the day. 703.746.5676.

Adult Protective Services

Services for adults who are being abused, neglected or exploited. 703.746.5778.

Older Adult Clinical Services

Provides comprehensive mental health services to residents over age 60 to promote quality of life and preserve independence including individual and family therapy, mental health case management, outreach, community education and support to caregivers. 703.746.3533.

CLINICAL & EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency Services

24-hour intervention for persons experiencing a mental health or substance abuse-related crisis. 703.746.3401.

Mental Health Outpatient Services

Provides individual, group and family counseling, medication management, emergency mental health services, assistance with admission to hospitals for psychiatric care, case management to help access and coordinate services, and in-home counseling services for the elderly or children in crisis. 703.746.3400.

Substance Abuse Outpatient Services

Provides a variety of programs tailored to treatment of individual needs and preferences for drug, alcohol and tobacco addiction. Outpatient Services: 703.746.3636. Central Intake: 703.746.3400.

Mental Health & Substance Abuse Support Groups

If your client is currently receiving services, speak to their service coordinator or other provider about referral to the group. If not currently receiving services, call Intake at 703.746.3535.

Opioid Treatment Program

Helps adults to stop using heroin and other illegal narcotics by prescribing and monitoring Methadone or Buprenorphine. 703.746.3600.

24-Hour Detox Services

Provides a short-term treatment environment for persons who are withdrawing from alcohol or drugs and works with them to accept ongoing treatment as appropriate. Detox also works with individuals with a co-occurring mental health problem. 703.746.3636.

New Lease of Life Program

A federal grant-funded primary care integration project, medical staff from Neighborhood Health providing primary medical care to behavioral health clients.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Residential Services

Permanent or transitional living arrangements, support, supervision and training for persons with severe mental illness and/or co-occurring substance use disorders in a home-like environment 703.746.3456.

Safe Haven

Provides permanent housing and services in separate apartment units for chronically homeless people with mental illness and/or other disabling conditions. 703.746.3410 or 703.746.3431.

West End Wellness Center

Assists residents with mental illness and/or co-occurring substance use to achieve personal, social and vocational competency, while promoting mental health recovery and physical wellness. 703.746.3456.

Comprehensive Recovery Team

Provides comprehensive, clinical case management and recovery coaching services to assist individuals with mental illness and their family members access needed services. 703.746.5090.

Intellectual Disability

Provides assistance to families and individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families, including in-home training, respite care and day programs including placement in jobs, work crews, sheltered workshops and pre-vocational programs. 703.746.3400.

Intellectual Disability Residential Services

Permanent assisted and supervised living including group homes and apartments. 703.746.3400.

TRAILS

Coordinated specialty services program that serves adolescents and young adults who are experiencing their first psychotic episode. 703.746.3441.



DCHS Task Forces & Committees

Supporting the mission and services of DCHS takes coordination and planning. Below is a list of the current task force and committee groups that help make that happen. For more information about the group, including eligibility, membership or attending or observing a meeting, speak to the contact person listed. The list is available under Department Information on the main [DCHS SharePoint](#) page.

ACPMT Case Review Team

Contact Person: Dawnel White
When they Meet: Every third Wednesday; 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave., Cyphers Room, 1 - 3 p.m.
Purpose/Role: Utilization review of all CSA-funded congregate care cases; part of the UM/UR policy and code requirements for CSA.

Alexandria Community Policy Management Team (ACPMT)

Contact Person: Dawnel White
When they Meet: Every third Wednesday; 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave., Cyphers Room, 3 - 5 p.m.
Purpose/Role: VA Code requirement for overseeing the operations of the Children's Services Act (CSA).

Center for Alexandria's Children Multidisciplinary Team

Contact Person: Giselle Palaez
When they Meet: Every fourth Tuesday; 1900 N. Beauregard, Suite 200, 1 p.m.
Purpose: To discuss joint investigations of child abuse or neglect in order to improve investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect and address any barriers, common themes and successes.

Child Change Agent Committee

Contact Person: Tricia Bassing and Greta Rosenzweig
When they Meet: Contact organizers for information
Purpose: To provide effective, efficient and coordinated services to clients engaged in both child welfare and behavioral health services.

Clinical Case Review Committee

Contact Person: Connie Juntunen
When they Meet: Weekly as requested on Tuesdays; 720 N. St. Asaph St., 2 - 4 p.m.
Purpose: To clinically review and consult on cases, as requested by clinicians.

Community High Risk Youth Review Team

Contact Person: Sinae Choi
When They Meet: Second and fourth Thursday; Center for Alexandria's Children; 1900 N. Beauregard, Suite 200, 10 - 12:30 p.m.
Purpose: Reviews all non-educational youth who are being recommended for residential treatment and youth who are at potential risk of placement in a residential treatment facility. Cases are staffed before an interagency team that represent the City of Alexandria's child serving agencies including but not limited to the DCHS, City of Alexandria Juvenile Court Services Unit and City of Alexandria Public Schools.

CSB Policies & Procedures Committee

Contact Person: Jennifer Kane
When They Meet: Quarterly in December, March, June and September
Purpose: Provides oversight for the development of new DCHS and CSB policies and revisions of existing policies. Policies that have been written/revised by the assigned reviewer are presented in front of the committee. The P & P Committee

reviews the policies to ensure that they are applicable, efficient, follow a best practice and are formatted properly. Please note: the vast majority of the policies pertain to the CSB. When the committee determines that a policy is applicable to DCHS, it is referred to the Leadership team by P & P member Carol Layer.

Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee

Contact Person: Allyson Coleman
When They Meet: Every third Thursday; 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave., Cyphers, 2:30 - 4 p.m.
Purpose: Promotes an organizational culture and the development of employees to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate supports and services to Alexandrians. The committee is also engaged in equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts in DCHS. CLCC aligns with the vision, mission and guiding principles of DCHS and the City of Alexandria and helps the organization meet best practice standards outlined by accreditation and regulatory agencies.

DCHS Change Agent Team

Contact Person: Susan Tatum or Esperita Bullard
When They Meet: Second Wednesday; 4480 King Street, Room 514, 9 - 10:30 a.m.
Purpose: To promote the ability of its members to support or lead the many changes that occur continuously at all levels of DCHS. To enhance DCHS integration by exchanging

information and perspectives across Centers.

DCHS Fall Employee Event

Contact Person: Linda Dell
When They Meet: Meet when needed.
Purpose: Coordinate the annual DCHS Fall Employee Event.

DCHS Homeless Crew

Contact Person: Carol Layer or Lesa Gilbert
When they Meet: Quarterly (date varies)
Purpose: To coordinate and improve services to homeless individuals within our Department and across the community; also serves to coordinate efforts to meet HUD requirements.

DCHS LGBTQ Work Group

Contact Person: Debra Evans
When they Meet: As needed; location varies
Purpose: To continue the work of the LGBTQ Task Force to improve services and outreach to LGBTQ individuals in the City of Alexandria.

Family Assessment Planning Team (FAPT)

Contact Person: Dawnel White
When they Meet: Every Tuesday at 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave.
Purpose: Reviews and approves all requests for services needing Children's Services Act (CSA) funding.

Family Engagement/Child Protective Services Committee

Contact Person: Greta Rosenzweig

When they Meet: Once a month or as needed; usually meets at 2525 Mt. Vernon Avenue or 1900 N. Beauregard for one hour.
Purpose: To monitor and develop internal guidance/policy to ensure the State mandate is met for holding family engagement meetings.

Family Engagement/Foster Care and Adoption Services Committee

Contact Person: Greta Rosenzweig
When They Meet: Once a month; 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave. for one hour.
Purpose: To monitor and develop internal guidance/policy to ensure the State mandate is met for holding family engagement meetings.

Family Support Workgroup for the Re-Entry Council

Contact Person: Connie Juntunen
When They Meet: First Wednesday; 12 - 1 p.m.
Purpose: To coordinate services related to families and to develop a stronger community infrastructure involving family participation for ex-offenders re-entering our community

ID Medical Services Committee

Contact Person: Berline Lewis
When They Meet: Quarterly
Purpose: Facilitate access to routine health care by following preventive health guidelines and best practices recommendations for treatment of chronic disease. Provide access to routine immunizations (including Influenza, Pneumococcal, Hepatitis B, Tetanus and Zosatavax). Ensure that referrals for diagnostic testing and specialty provider consultations are accomplished. Ensure that medication equip-

ment's, supplies and home therapy services are made available to individuals. Assess and monitor for changes in health status and ensures that follow up medical care is available. Provide Medication Management for the group homes which include acquiring, administering and documenting medications administration according to established procedures.

ID Residential Screening Committee

Contact Person: Berline Lewis
When they Meet: Once a month or as needed
Purpose: Reviews referrals for admission to CSB Intellectual Disabilities residential programs.

Kinship Care Committee

Contact Person: Doug Brown
When They Meet: Once a month at 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave.
Purpose: To develop an internal Kinship Care Assessment Tool and to assess and develop internal guidance/policy to support Kinship placements.

Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC)

Contact Person: Robin Crawley
When they Meet: Quarterly (sub-committees meet as needed).
Purpose: The local planning and advisory body for the implementation of Alexandria's birth through 5 years of age interagency system for early intervention services. Charged to develop, implement and evaluate Alexandria's early intervention system through the development of partnerships for information sharing, public awareness and child find activities. Provides opportunities for programs to partner in child find, public awareness,

community needs assessment, system evaluation and professional development. Made up of representatives from education, community health, department of community and human services and child welfare and family members who have children with special needs and other organizations that provide services to young children and their families.

Quality Assurance Committee

Contact Person: Jennifer Kane
When They Meet: Quarterly on first Wednesdays
Purpose: Made up of various managers and clinical staff who unite with a common goal of providing quality services in the most efficient way possible. Responsible for ensuring that any changes in clinical or administrative practices or operations are in compliance with applicable statewide initiatives, regulatory and accrediting standards. Makes recommendations to the Leadership Team as appropriate and will also receive information or direction from members of Leadership.

Residential Facilities Maintenance Work Group

Contact Person: Linda Dell
When They Meet: Quarterly
Purpose: To enhance communication among multiple programs to aid in setting residential facilities maintenance priorities, and to share information about status of projects.

Safety Committee

Contact Person: Justin Wise
When They Meet: Every last Tuesday; 4480 King St., 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Purpose: To en-

sure that the agency adheres to safety regulations set forth by our governing bodies, primarily state licensing and CARE. Coordinates safety inspections and drills at all primary DCHS sites, coordinates inspections by external safety bodies, reviews incident reports to identify safety issues or trends, and ensures the availability of certain safety equipment and supplies. Also available to assist in evaluating and assisting to solve safety concerns brought by staff at all DCHS locations.

Star Awards Committee

Contact Person: Octavius Fulton
When they Meet: Every second Wednesday; 2525 Mt. Vernon Ave., 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Purpose: To recognize significant employee contributions through a formal annual recognition and monetary award program, as well as an ongoing, day-to-day, peer-to-peer recognition program and bi-annual awards in accordance with City policy. 🌱



Hello & Goodbye

NEW STAFF

ROOZBEH BADI

Roozbeh Badii is a Medical Supervisor with Methadone Maintenance.

AISHA CODY

Aisha Cody is the Youth Development Team Leader with the Center for Children and Families. She brings with her great experience in evidence-based program development and oversight, and grants and coalitions at the local and federal level. She is well versed in positive youth development with a strong knowledge base in sexual health. She has her Master's in Public Administration and is a Certified Health Education Specialist.



JENNIFER CORBETT

Jennifer Corbett is back at DCHS as the Program Manager for Foster Care and Adoption in Child Welfare Services. For the past two years she worked at DC Child and Family Services Agency where she served as a

Supervisory Planning Advisor, successfully managing a team of project and planning specialists responsible for research, policy review, project management and the planning and implementation of the agency's child welfare program initiatives. Prior to that, she worked at DCHS as the Quality Assurance Specialist and a foster care social worker within Child Welfare Services. Jennifer has over 11 years of experience in child welfare. She has a BA in Health and Human Services and a MSW from the University at Buffalo as well as her MBA from the University of Maryland. Jennifer volunteers with the Girl Scouts, enjoys mentoring teenage and young women and pursuing her interest in financial management.



ASHLEY DUQUETTE

Ashley Duquette, LPC recently joined the Youth and Family Team for outpatient therapy and counseling at the Juvenile Detention Center. She

previously worked as a dance therapist with inpatient psychiatric adults and children in Fredericksburg. Her focus has been on trauma-informed care using body-based coping and use of movement metaphor in the therapeutic approach. Originally from Massachusetts, she began working with families as a care coordinator, moving towards crisis stabilization using social movement groups to enhance mood and interpersonal awareness. She has worked with children with autism, a broad range of mental health diagnosis in seniors, adults, adolescents and youth, and has facilitated community movement groups for those interested in mindfulness and creative play through dance. She also is a dance teacher and lover of animals. She is pleased to join the team, as she is passionate about working with families and youth.



CYNTHIA GARRISON

Cynthia "Ce" Garrison joined DCHS as a Volunteer Developer

for the Sexual Assault Center in December. She comes to Alexandria from Louisville, KY where previously working as a family advocate in an intimate partner and sexual violence shelter. She has a master's degree in Conflict Management with a focus in community-based violence prevention. In spare time, she works with LGBTQ youth, enjoys hiking and camping, and napping with her two dogs.



AKILAH HALL

Akilah Hall joined DCHS as a Benefit Programs Specialist. Akilah brings with her seven-plus years of experience working with local communities in the state of Virginia administering SNAP, FC Medicaid and TANF. Previously, she worked with the Family services and Benefit programs departments with Franklin City DSS and The City of Manassas Park DSS in multiple positions. She also has served in many capacities with her local church administering free food and other household

supplies to the local community in the Tidewater and Hampton Roads area. Because of the growing needs of her family, Akilah recently located back to her childhood home and currently lives in Maryland with her two daughters. She is excited about joining the City of Alexandria family.



JOSEPH PERRY

Joseph Perry II joined DCHS as the new Diversion Case Manager. A recent graduate of Howard University with a BS in Community Health, he worked there as a Peer Health Educator for the Substance Abuse & HIV Outreach Program, conducted several outreach initiatives to educate about STD and HIV prevention, intimate partner abuse, substance abuse, and advocated to get K2 (synthetic marijuana) off of the streets in DC. Most recently he worked for the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless VA Safe Haven Program, which houses homeless Veterans with mental illness. He is a native of North Carolina and enjoys music, sports, traveling, sight-seeing, catching a movie and being a homebody. His future goals include obtaining both a MSW and MPH and furthering his career in aiding low-income and minority populations.

JANICE PETTY

Janice Petty is a Senior Therapist with Substance Abuse Outpatient Services. She is a native



of South Carolina who has an extensive background working in the arenas of substance abuse and criminal justice. She was formerly employed with Alexandria ASAP and Hampton-Newport News Community Services Board. Away from work, Janice enjoys reading, shopping and traveling. She is excited to be part of our DCHS.



JENNIFER ROHRER

Jennifer Rohrer, Ph.D., joined DCHS as the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Coordinator. She previously served as faculty at the George Washington University and is a clinical and forensic psychologist. She has extensive experience working with law enforcement and in emergency psychiatric services and forensic psychiatric and correctional facilities. She currently teaches Psychology of Law Enforcement at Marymount University and maintains a small private practice in which she conducts forensic evaluations and serves as an expert witness locally and nationally. She enjoys traveling, fitness and spending time with friends and family.

Toastmaster Honors

DCHS Comprehensive Recovery Team Leader **Bill Rooney** presents Toastmaster **Dana Woolfolk** with the Advance Leader Bronze award for successfully completing several of the requirements of the Toastmasters leadership program. Woolfolk has served as the club's President for the past eight months, leading the club and its executive team. He mentors new club members, coordinates club officers training and is instrumental in the development of the club's formal success plan. When Woolfolk is not working behind the scenes growing the club he can be found behind the lectern delivering a variety of speeches ranging from leadership topics to humorous stories.



LOURDES SAN PEDRO

Lourdes San Pedro is a Senior Therapist with the Substance Abuse Sober Living Unit.

JOB CHANGES

Douglas Brown is the Program Manager in Child Welfare. **Talia Bryan** is a Senior Therapist with Emergency Services? **Gabriel Duer** is a Therapist Supervisor with Emergency Services. **Maggie Lyons** is a Senior Therapist on the Mental Health Unit at the Adult Detention Center. **Allison Guernsey** is a Therapist Supervisor with Emergency Services. **Wilma Roberts** is a Senior Therapist for Geriatric Mental Health. **Mary Valad** is a Senior Therapist in Emergency Services.

RETIREMENTS

Evelyn Miles retired in December 2015. She was a VIEW Employment and Training Supervisor at the Center for Economic Development.



Connect seeks to inform DCHS employees about programs, services and changes within the Department. It also introduces you to one another on a more personal level, recognizes employee and team accomplishments, and helps foster relationships between programs and employees across DCHS. It features program activities and special events and helps keep you informed on departmental initiatives.

We are always looking for news and ideas for stories. If you have an idea for a story or content, contact Carmen Andres at carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov or call 5753.

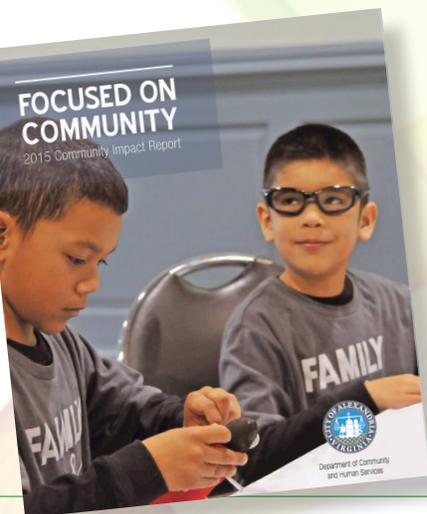
To report significant errors in this newsletter, please email carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov

News You Can Use



ANNUAL REPORT

Have you seen the DCHS Annual Report yet? Please take time to look at the highlights of our accomplishments and the people we serve. Inside you will find information about our centers



and programs and the impact of our services on the community. Your work is making a difference! You can find it at www.alexandriava.gov/DCHS under [Community Impact Report](#).

CITY TUITION ASSISTANCE

Did you know that the City provides tuition assistance to its employees? The [City's Tuition Assistance program](#) provides financial support for voluntary education programs that help City employees perform more effectively in their current job and career field, and encourage them to achieve their career goals. The Human Resources Department

works in partnership with several nationally known universities and colleges to align various programs/certifications to job series and career paths.

The program provides two options for tuition assistance—reimbursement and deferred billing and partners with a variety of academic institutions to offer employee tuition discounts up to 30 percent and/or academic guidance and job alignment support, including American Public University, American Military University, Strayer University, the University of Phoenix, Walden University, Washington School of Psychiatry and Virginia Tech.

Employees are encouraged to apply for TA at least 30 days



before the course begins. You may take as many courses up to the maximum allowed tuition assistance amount (\$1,200 for regular full-time and \$600 for regular part-time). If funding is available toward the end of the fiscal year, HRD will announce an open period to accept applications with the remaining funds. 🌱



DCHS Facilities maintenance crews head out during the blizzard to clear DCHS residential properties. They also aided residential staff with transportation to and from group homes.

Thank You!

“Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

In keeping with the famous creed of the US Post Office, a dedicated group of DCHS staff from Facilities, MH/SA/ID Residential, Emergency Services, Detox, the Mill Road kitchen and the Adult Center Administrative Support Services team braved record-breaking snowfall and treacherous travel conditions to ensure that excellent customer service was not disrupted when the City closed for business during Winter Storm Jonas. Many staff stayed for days in local hotels to ensure that they could get to their worksites and provide care and support to the people whom we serve. We want to thank these selfless colleagues for their heroic efforts and unprecedented teamwork! 🌱 ~Director of Center for Adult Services Carol Layer