

TEXAS JUVENILE JUSTICE TODAY

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PAWS Program Expands to Gainesville

The much anticipated expansion of the TJJD's Pairing Achievement With Success (PAWS) program took place in June as the highly successful program began operations on the Gainesville State School campus. Thus far, five youth and five dogs have been paired.

The PAWS program pairs select TJJD youth with K9 partners for a minimum of 12 weeks. The dogs, which come from local animal shelters, learn basic commands, improved socialization skills, and earn a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) Certification. This certification is recognized as the gold standard for dog behavior. Youth learn responsibility and benefit from the companionship.

Youth selected to participate in the program are carefully chosen to ensure they will have the right temperament to work with the dogs. These youth are typically some of the best behaved youth on campus and have earned the right to participate in the program. All youth live in the designated PAWS dorm and, during the 12-week program,

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A Message From the Director



David Reilly

I'm happy to report that regional diversions efforts continue as counties across the state are utilizing

local resources that will allow them to keep more youth out of the state system. Since the diversion program began two months ago, TJJJ has received 61 diversion applications and approved 20 placements. Eleven youth have been placed thus far and nine others are awaiting judicial approval. TJJJ staff are currently considering another four applications and expect to have 30 successful diversions by August 31, 2016.

The initial Discretionary State Aid application process has concluded and by early August we will notify probation departments whether their applications were approved. This \$1.8 million program was established by SB 1630 during the 84th Legislative Session to enhance existing programs or establish new performance-based programs at the local level. TJJJ received 26 applications. TJJJ staff worked with interested probation departments to develop applications to provide services through programs that are research-based, focused on positive outcomes, identify at-risk populations and reduce recidivism.

TJJJ hosted its second site visit for the Youth In Custody Practice Model consultants the last week of July at Mart and I came away with renewed excitement about our future. I was particularly impressed by the candidness of the

TJJJ staff and their genuine desire to improve. This agency-wide effort will pay great dividends over the next few years as we continue implementing best practices and working to ensure the best days of our agency are ahead.

The 85th Texas Legislative Session is only a few short months away and our Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) will be submitted later this month after review and approval by the Board. It consists of several parts, including the base request and exceptional items (a legislative wish list of sorts). In this cycle of preparing the LAR, all agencies were required to decrease their current expenses by 4% in their base request, with exceptions for some types of programs. Those cuts to our baseline would have a dramatic impact on state and county operations and our ability to treat and rehabilitate our growing youth population. Therefore, replacing that funding will be our highest priority exceptional item.

There has been considerable talk among State leadership offices about the potential decline in available funding for the 2018/2019 biennium (state-wide), the desire to reduce state spending, and the limited capacity to support new initiatives. This does not alter the agency's approach to ask for what the system needs to continue supporting front end services that probation departments provide and improving the culture, safety and security of our facilities, to support our staff through training and salary needs, to address our substantial IT needs, to enhance positive programming and re-entry services to reduce recidivism.

We recently completed a system-

wide salary study to support requests in our LAR related to the current market. The findings of this study support requests on both the state and county side. On the state side, we are recommending JCO and parole officer salaries become and remain equitable with correctional officers and parole officers at TDCJ. In addition, the study findings represent a strong basis for requesting the adjustment of salaries for positions other than JCOs, parole officers and teachers (whose salaries are set by local school districts) to become more competitive in the market. On the county side, we are recommending an increase in funding equivalent to 3% of case-load carrying juvenile probation and supervision officers to all departments to use for salary increases.

On August 1, the first day of the new school year, we began a flexible block schedule that will transform the way educational services and rehabilitation services are provided to TJJJ youth residing in our secure facilities. The purpose for the block schedule is to increase safety for students and staff, reduce class sizes, improve instruction for students and increase rehabilitative specialized treatment. This will free up time for additional treatment and activities while ensuring education is delivered in the most meaningful environment possible.

Since it will be a couple of months before the next edition of TJJJ Today is published, I'd like to take this opportunity, in recognition of Labor Day coming up soon, to thank all of you who "toil in the vineyards" of our profession and for your dedicated commitment to our mission.



Bexar County JPD Partners With Texas Ramp Project

In Bexar County, youth assigned to Community Service Restitution work crews are constructing free wheelchair ramps for the elderly and people with disabilities.

Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department has partnered with the Texas Ramp Project -- a statewide nonprofit that builds free wheelchair ramps for the elderly and people with disabilities who cannot afford them on their own. Texas Ramp Project provides training, materials and tools for the CSR work crews, as well as identifies and qualifies all ramp recipients.

Beginning in February of this year,

John Laine, State Coordinator for the Texas Ramp Project, began providing



ramp construction training to community service restitution staff at the Bexar County Juvenile Probation Department. Since then, four ramps have been built, and

thirty youth have taken part in the project. Collectively, they have performed a total of 228 community service hours. Equally important, since the ramps are constructed on-site at the home of the recipient, youth are able to meet the elderly and the recipients with disabilities, thereby rendering a very meaningful and enriching community service experience.

The Texas Ramp Project is looking for more volunteers throughout Texas. To volunteer or learn more about the Texas Ramp Project, please go to www.texasramps.org.

PAWS Program Expands to Gainesville (con't)



are responsible not only for training the dogs but must care for, exercise, feed and nurture the pets.

Case Manager Marsha Deeds, at 17-year veteran at TJJD, oversees the PAWS dorm and said she enjoys seeing the young men interacting with their K9 charges.

"I'm not really a dog person," Deeds said. "But now I see how smart they are and how much they enjoy the youth."

PAWS dorm JCO IV Laquita Mitchell, who has been at Gainesville for four years, said the youth seem very focused and relaxed when working

with their dogs.

"This program is great because these kids feel like they are needed for something," Mitchell said, "They appreciate someone depending upon them and they're learning to be unselfish."

Matching each youth with a dog is a thoughtful and deliberative process. Oftentimes, the young man's needs and strengths are matched with those of his K9 partner. According the Gainesville Assistant Superintendent Deidre Reece, that is particularly true in one recently made partnership.

"Youth RT is a very sensitive young man and has a disabled sister that he is fiercely protective of," Reece said. "We paired him with a dog that had apparently been physically and emotionally abused. The dog has responded extremely well to RT's caretaker and protective nature. It's been a perfect match."

Much like the youth, PAWS dogs have undergone numerous obstacles on

their way to the program. The animals are provided by Noah's Ark Animal Shelter in Gainesville. The shelter and Executive Director Tory Ball decided to partner with the Gainesville program after being approached by TJJD PAWS creator and overseer Cris Burton. She said she is glad to be partnered with the school and is glad that the program is helping the dogs as well as the youth.

"Most of our animals have been abandoned," Ball said. "Unfortunately, many of the dogs are harder to place in permanent homes because of behavioral issues. I get great satisfaction knowing that dogs who were less likely to be adopted are getting a second chance."

Ball said she has checked on the animals placed in the PAWS program. She believes the program is doing a great job and that, when she visits, the youth love to question her about dogs.

Once the training program is completed, the Gainesville State School and Noah's Ark will hold an adoption day. This is a chance for youth to help their K9 friends demonstrate their new skills and tricks and meet prospective new owners.



Education Division Deploys Tablet Incentives

The Texas Juvenile Justice Department's Education Division introduced new technology into the lives of select youth through the deployment of the American Prison Data System (APDS) tablet in a three-month pilot program. The tablet is similar to an iPad or Android device but is encased in a tamper-proof, military grade shell to protect it from abuse. The tablet utilizes an Android operating system and comes preloaded with a range of programs and services and an extensive library.

Eighty tablets, funded through federal Title 1 grant money, have now been deployed at both the Gainesville and Giddings facilities. Youth receiving the tablets qualified by reaching behavior and educational goals such as academic grades, number of responsibility center referrals, and security admittances. Points were accumulated and calculated to implement a dorm "group incentive." In Gainesville and Giddings, there were three-four dorms that qualified to receive and use the tablets for 30 days. Youth will have to support each other to qualify as the top dorms to receive the tablets every month. They also must complete and submit educational

enrichment activities every day so that achievement points will accumulate throughout the month. If the youth is referred to security and or has been issued a Loss of Privileges (LOP), youth will not be able to use a tablet until they are off the LOP.



The implementation of tablets as an incentive for youth is an example of innovative programming designed to afford youth the opportunity to make appropriate choices while participating in services directly matched with their educational needs. This program addresses the youth's individual risk factors, especially those around skill development and demonstration. The tablets will help facilitate and shape behavior and build coping skills through targeted skill development with directed practice, positive reinforcement, and

staff modeling of pro-social skills. The tablets will serve as a valuable resource for reducing boredom, rewarding good behavior by extending technology privileges, and facilitating youth education and rehabilitation. The goal is to help youth reduce negative behavior while developing corresponding protective factors to build long-term, internalized changes in behavior.

APDS is the vendor for the tablets. They support the security system through monitoring cellular data that is not connected to the Internet, but rather only activates applications. The youth have access to thousands of books through the National Prison Library, educational videos, educational applications to target critical areas, Khan Academy for Math and some entertainment applications.

TJJD will be monitoring behavior goals and academic improvement over the next 3 months and will make adjustments where necessary. The students were very excited and engaged with the tablets and have so far accessed more than 700 books so far from the online library!

Lubbock County Juvenile Justice Center Achieves Federal PREA Compliance

(This article appeared on the website of Lubbock television station KCBD)

LUBBOCK, TX (KCBD) - "I am excited to announce that on June 2, 2016 the Department of Justice certified the Lubbock County Juvenile Justice Center as PREA compliant. This means LCJJC was found to be in compliance with all 41 of the audited PREA standards. We became only the 6th County operated facility in the State of Texas to do so," said director William Carter.

"The Lubbock County Juvenile Justice Center has always provided excellent care of the individuals in our custody and achieving this certification simply confirms our commitment to provide excellent services to the youth of Lubbock County," said Carter.

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed in 2003 with unanimous support from both parties in Congress. PREA is the first United States Federal Law passed dealing with sexual abuse of incarcerated persons.

The purpose of the act is to "provide for the analysis of the incidence and effects of prison rape in Federal, State, and local institutions and to provide information, resources, recommendations, and funding to protect individuals from prison rape." (Prison Rape Elimination Act, 2003).

The act also created the National Prison Rape Elimination Commission and charged it with developing draft standards for the elimination of prison rape. Those standards were published

in June 2009, and were turned over to the Department of Justice for review and passage as a final rule. That final rule became effective August 20, 2012.

"The hard work of our PREA Coordinator Mr. Regan Bullard and Facility Administrator Chris Hill along with all of our staff enabled us to achieve this certification and I want to thank them for their dedication to this project," said Carter.



TJJD Advisory Council – A Review and Analysis



By Doug Vance, PhD, Chief Probation Officer, Brazos County Juvenile Probation Department

In order to provide relevant information to readers regarding TJJD Advisory Council projects and activities, the Advisory Council has recently been afforded the prestigious opportunity of submitting a news and information article for each publication of TJJD's newsletter *Juvenile Justice Today*. For this initial installment, I thought it might be of interest to provide readers with some basic background information regarding the establishment, purpose, and benefits of the Advisory Council.

The Texas Juvenile Justice Department's Advisory Council on Juvenile Services is a legislatively mandated body that reports directly to the TJJD Board of Directors. Advisory Council membership consists of the following appointments:

- TJJD Executive Director
- TJJD Director of Probation Services
- Executive Commissioner of Health and Human Services
- One County Commissioner
- Two Juvenile Court Judges
- Seven Chief Juvenile Probation Officers.

Chief Juvenile Probation appointees are determined by a collaborative process involving

each of the seven juvenile probation chief associations nominating member candidates for appointment consideration. The TJJD Board of Directors then acts upon those nominations.

Legislatively mandated duties of the Advisory Council consist of:

- Determining the needs and problems of county juvenile boards and probation departments.
- Conducting long-range strategic planning.
- Reviewing and proposing revisions to existing or newly proposed standards affecting juvenile probation programs, services, or facilities.
- Analyzing the potential cost impact on juvenile probation departments of new standards proposed by the board.
- Advising the board on any other matter on the request of the board.

Since its 2012 inception, the Advisory Council has been very active in discussions and related work pertaining to a variety of important juvenile justice matters that include standards of care, funding formula revision, risk/need assessment, and mental health funding to name a few. In this vein, rather than work in a vacuum, the Advisory Council has deemed it profitable to work closely with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department and the many Juvenile Probation Departments in Texas in order to successfully create enduring

partnerships with a multitude of individual practitioners and strategic organizations that include the Texas Probation Association, the Juvenile Justice Association of Texas, the Texas Juvenile Detention Association, as well as various Child Advocacy Organizations and Child Service Agencies.

Without an Advisory Council, Juvenile Probation Departments and Child Service Agencies would be left with limited means available for systemic and formalized representation in the major decision-making processes occurring at the State level that have direct impact upon juvenile probation and the multitude of children and families served throughout the system. In this sense, the Advisory Council is that formally recognized vehicle that enables meaningful participation by designated stakeholders in shaping the scope and course of Texas Juvenile Justice.

The Advisory Council, by its very design, provides that indispensable bridge between Juvenile Probation, Child Service Agencies, and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, so that together, and in unison, we can more effectively assuage the many daunting challenges of today and secure the means necessary to forge for posterities sake, a promising future, thereby ensuring that the Texas Juvenile Justice System will continue to be for generations to come, second to none.



TJJD PREA Audits Completed; Agency Assisting Counties

Each of TJJD's 14 facilities (secure and halfway houses) have been audited for compliance with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act and have all been found PREA compliant, completing the first three-year audit cycle which ends August 19, 2016. Congratulations to each of these facilities and their staff for maintaining the sexual safety culture of TJJD youth. TJJD staff remains committed to sustaining this effort!

The second three-year audit cycle begins on August 20, 2016 through August 19th, 2019. During this second audit cycle, beginning in mid-2017 Ron Jackson, Brownwood House, Evins, Tamayo House and McFadden Ranch will be scheduled to have their second audit. The TJJD PREA Compliance Department will commence the preparation process for these facilities in the fall of this year.

Ten county detention facilities have been PREA audited and have been found PREA compliant. Val Verde, Tarrant, San Patricio, Brazoria, Galveston and Grayson County are the latest ones to be audited and are currently in their post-audit corrective action phase. Upcoming audits in the months of July through August will be Nueces, Van Zandt, Midland, Dallas, Harris, Angelina, Brazos, Cameron, Collin, Ft Bend, Hays, Hidalgo, Jefferson, Randall, Starr, Taylor, Tom Green, and Webb counties respectfully.

TJJD is committed to assisting county partners in achieving PREA compliance through the provision of technical assistance, PREA training and by either facilitating or performing their PREA audits. Thus far Victoria and El Paso counties have requested that TJJD conduct their audit during this second three-year audit cycle while Hardin, Atascosa, Duval, Hunt, Kerr, Guadalupe, McLennan, Smith, Wichita, Deaf Smith, Floyd, Ector, Harrison, and Ellis counties have all expressed an interest in having TJJD perform their audit during this audit cycle.

If you would like to learn and or know more about the Prison Rape Elimination Act and the PREA audit process please feel free to contact Jerome K. Williams, Director of the PREA Compliance Department at 512-490-7671 or email him at Jerome.williams@tjjd.texas.gov.

Gregg County Deputy Probation Chief Receives Lifetime Achievement Award



(This story reprinted from the July 11, 2016 Longview News Journal)

Aris Johnson, the deputy chief at Gregg County's Juvenile Probation Department, recently received the Charles W. Hawkes Lifetime Achievement Award from the Texas Probation Association.

The statewide probationers group gave out the award at its annual conference in San Marcos this spring. The Hawkes award is considered the association's highest award, given to individuals who, over the years, have made significant contributions to the field of community corrections.

Johnson has worked with Gregg County for 24 years, serving as an intake officer and a casework supervisor

before becoming deputy chief. Previously, he worked 14 years at Harrison County Juvenile Probation Department as a detention superintendent and as chief juvenile probation officer.

"We are extremely proud of Aris for receiving this well deserved recognition," Gregg County Juvenile Probation Chief Bing Canion said.

Johnson is a lifetime member of the Texas Probation Association, serving on both the membership and juvenile legislative committees. He was twice elected to the board of directors and served as the association's president. He's also a member of the Texas Corrections Association, where he also served as president.

Johnson is a member of the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice in Washington, D.C., and the Texas Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, and past president of both the East Texas Network for Children and Northeast Texas Juvenile Chief's Association.



Evins Youth Donate Zoo Chairs To Local Elementary School



Edinburg, Lincoln Elementary School Principal Eva Sandoval and Construction Technology Instructor Roberto Flores from Evins Regional Juvenile Center

The construction class at the Lone Star High School South (Evins) designed and created 18 zoo animal chairs to be donated to a local school for young children to enjoy. The chairs featured three pandas, five elephants, five zebras, and five giraffes.

LSHSS construction class students knew the chairs would be donated to a local school for young children and took great care to apply the skills they learned in the class. The chairs were donated to the Lincoln Elementary School that serves

pre-K through 5th grades in the Edinburg Consolidated Independent School District.

Lincoln Elementary School Principal Eva Sandoval was very appreciative of the 18 chairs and noted that the students will love the chairs. She added they would be given to the early grades to motivate the students to read.

Construction teacher Roberto Flores and LSHSS former Principal Dr. George Padilla delivered the chairs to the school on Friday, May 13, 2016. Dr. Padilla actually attended Lincoln Elementary School when he was young.

Bexar County Mental Health Court for Girls Gets Top Honor Crossroads' focus is mental health

The following article is reprinted from the July 7, 2016 edition of the San Antonio Express News.

By Elizabeth Zavala
July 7, 2016

A Bexar County speciality court that deals with the mental health needs of girls has received a national award for its innovation and effectiveness serving adolescents in the justice system.

Crossroads Girls Mental Health Court is among five programs to receive the 2016 National Criminal Justice Association Outstanding Criminal Justice Program award for the western region, officials said Thursday.

State District Judge Laura Parker, who runs Crossroads Court out of her 386th Juvenile District Court, will accept the award at an NCJA forum in August in Philadelphia.

"This is a prestigious award, and we are honored to receive it," Parker said in a statement announcing the recognition.

"The impetus for establishing this diversion program was to address

the mental health needs of junior high-aged girls before they become extensively involved in the juvenile system," Parker said. "By focusing on the root causes contributing to delinquency, this court can positively impact these girls' lives."

The Bexar County Juvenile Justice & Mental Health Task Force spent a year developing the Crossroads program and started it in 2009 with two Justice Department grants totaling nearly \$250,000, said Lynne Wilkerson, Bexar County's chief juvenile probation officer.

"The program was innovative when she (Parker) created it six and a half years ago, and now it has become a national model for other specialty courts," Wilkerson said.

Wilkerson said the program is voluntary and has specific supervision and participation requirements, including regular court appearances, home-based treatment services and meetings with probation officers. Drug testing also is required.

"We try to keep the caseload manageable to around 12 at any given

time because it is a very intensive program," Wilkerson said, adding that there are 10 girls currently enrolled. Since its inception, Crossroads Court has served 108 girls.

Last year, Bexar County received a \$249,980 grant from the Justice Department to create a court much like Crossroads, but for boys. The Males in Need of Direction, or MIND Court, will be run by 289th Juvenile District Court Judge Daphne Previti Austin.

MIND Court, which Parker and Austin have said they hope to launch in September, will be designed to provide treatment instead of incarceration for young men who struggle with mental illness, among other initiatives to prevent future involvement in the criminal justice system.

Photo: State District Judge Laura Parker runs Crossroads Girls Mental Health Court, which started in 2009, out of her 386th Juvenile District Court. Last year, Bexar County received a \$249,980 grant from the Justice Department to create a court much like Crossroads, but for boys. That one could be launched this year.



SPOTLIGHT



April Hannah Assistant Superintendent at Giddings State School

Where are you from originally and where have you spent the majority of your adult life?

I was born in Little Rock, Arkansas; however, my father was in the Army, and growing up, I traveled across the United States, spanning three states (Colorado, Texas, Kansas) and we lived in Germany twice. I graduated high school in Junction City, Kansas, outside of Ft. Riley, Kansas. I was previously married to a military officer, and this union took me cross country again to an live in three more states (Georgia, Missouri, and North Carolina, and Texas again). I have been fortunate to live in many different parts of the country, but I still consider Arkansas as my home, being all of my family still resides there.

What led you to your career in juvenile justice?

I'm the oldest of five daughters, and I've always enjoyed working with young people. When I moved to Ft. Hood, Texas in 1998, I was one year short of completing my Bachelor's degree, so when I went to be advised at the University of Central Texas (Tarleton State University acquired

the school in the Fall of 1999) , my question was "What degree can I get within the next twelve months, and still graduate as scheduled"? I had more than enough transfer credits for a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, so I jumped at that option. I always toyed with the possibility of going to law school, so this seemed like a perfect fit. During this time, I was offered an internship at the Bell County Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program in Killeen, and subsequently got hired as a Case Manager with Communities In Schools at the same site. Since then, I've been a case manager in a residential SBTP program, the Director of Case Management for G4S, an Assistant Detention Director for GA Department of Juvenile Justice, an Assistant Facility Administrator again with G4S, and an Internal Affairs Investigator with the AR Division of Youth Services. So I guess, it was almost a fluke, because if my transfer credits had been enough for a degree in education, art, or counseling, I'd be doing one of those jobs.

What do you want others to know about Giddings State School?

There's a lot of history at Giddings State School. The street our facility is located on is named after then Texas Youth Commission's Executive Director

Dr. James A. Turman, whom the groundbreaking lawsuit Morales vs Turman is litigated against, which has forever changed the way juvenile justice correctional/rehabilitation facilities nationwide operate. The Giddings State School is also the only facility in the country that operates the Capital and Serious Violent Offender Treatment Program, that continues to provide intensive treatment to youth, that have committed more heinous crimes in our system. Besides those things, its one of the most beautiful campuses I've ever visited or worked at. I'm equally proud to say that we have a very talented and dedicated staff base, many who've worked at this facility in excess of 10, 15, 20, and 30 plus years. Several of the current Central Office staff began their careers at Giddings.

What is the best part of your job?

I hate to sound like a cliché but I really love all parts of my job. I love providing activities for the youth and staff at the Giddings State School. I can remember a conversation I had years ago with a young man on my caseload, when returning to work on a Monday afternoon. He asked me did I have a good weekend, and I replied "Yes, I took my children and nieces to the zoo, we had a lot of fun." The



April Hannah

Assistant Superintendent at Giddings State School

young man in turn replied, “I’ve never been to the zoo.” At fifteen or sixteen years old, he made me realize that many of the youth we serve don’t experience some of the “normal” childhood experiences that we have had or provide to our own families. Since then, I have made a point of normalizing the lives of the youth I come in contact as much as possible, from Easter Egg hunts, to Trick or Treating inside the facility, or enjoying a simple game of BINGO with an ice cream sundae. Many of our youth have seen and done things that most of us can never imagine living through. I truly believe that every kid sometimes just wants to be a kid, and that’s all they should have to be for a moment in time.

What are your greatest challenges as the Giddings Assistant Superintendent?

As with most things in life, change is hard for people. My greatest challenge as the Assistant Superintendent at Giddings is going through this change process, and being patient with the process. I’m excited at what’s been accomplished in the past 145 days, and I’m looking forward to what lies ahead.

When you are not working, how do you spend your time?

My family and I relocated, and

yes we live in the tiny town of Giddings, four months ago, and it’s been quite an adjustment for my teenage daughters, lol. When I’m not working, this is almost an oxymoron, we like to travel and visit the Big State of Texas. We’ve spent a considerable amount of time in Dallas, College Station (which I love, and wish was closer to Giddings) Houston, and have even ventured to the coast to dip our toes in the Gulf of Mexico at Galveston. My husband is a self proclaimed carnivore, so eating as much Texas Bar-be-Que we can get our hands on has become a hobby of ours. Chip Walters had to correct me very early on that “Texans don’t eat hot dogs, they eat sausages.” I’ve not made that mistake again, lol.

What advice would you give to a young new juvenile justice professional?

One of my favorite movies is The Devil Wears Prada. While it may be considered a “chick flick” I’d recommend it to anyone who hasn’t seen it. The movie, sad but true is in many ways very indicative of what any new professional experiences in the early stages of their career. There will be days when you will be unsure if “this” is what you really want to do. Your hopes and dreams will appear unattainable. The demands will seem nearly impossible. Things you swore you

would “never” do may become your reality. The world will become your worse enemy, any you will feel alone and want to give up. DON’T! That’s my first piece of advice. Don’t give up. You are more equipped than you might believe to handle anything and everything that is thrown your way. Mr. Ashrita Furman currently holds the most Guinness World Records with more than 125 titles. That’s a lot of attempts, fails, and more importantly successes. My second piece of advice, when in doubt, ASK. Everyone was “the new kid on the block” at some point, so don’t be afraid to seek out guidance . Develop a support system. I have been fortunate enough in my career to have some awesome people willing to nurture a newbie like me, and their friendships and advice have been invaluable. Lastly, be patient with yourself and the process. Things will seem foreign, you might have to work a little harder at first, but a learning curve is natural in all aspects of life. On the bookshelf, in my office, I have two books that perfectly sums up all of my advice, one is Eat Less Cottage Cheese and More Ice Cream, by Erma Bombeck; and the other is Everybody’s Got Something, by Robin Roberts. They are both constant reminders of the important things and life, and help me to stay focused on recognizing them.





Mart Celebrates Moms

On May 19th, 2016, McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility received 60 visitors to celebrate the mothers of youth on campus at a Mother-Son Banquet. Families enjoyed a song written and sung by one of the youth and a presentation of the seven habits to practice raising strong children by the recreation staff. Then, while eating lunch, the mothers were encouraged to stay strong by a guest speaker discussing the importance of mothers in a child’s life. The sons presented a certificate of appreciation to their moms for being there for them through the good and bad times. The afternoon wrapped up with a few rounds of bingo and family photos.

MRTC Hosts Family Event

The Mart Regional Treatment Center hosted a family event in April with the theme “Hope Springs Eternal-Steps to a New Future.” Family members enjoyed lunch with their youth and then worked on a family project where each youth and their families uniquely designed and painted a stepping stone. The stepping stones will be planted on the campus of MRTC, some of which adorn the walk way into the facility.



Evins Youth Enjoy July 4th Celebration

Evins youth celebrated the 4th of July weekend with an “Independence Day Challenge,” an activity that rewards good behavior with an enjoyable campus outing. The youth were asked to be on their best behavior and meet certain criteria to qualify for the event three weeks prior to the event. Eventually, 43 youth were able to meet the challenge and enjoyed a full fun day of on-campus activities.

Although it was a hot day, the youth were able to enjoy a watermelon eating contest, chili cheese hotdogs, chips, and nachos while listening to

music and having fun by the pool and a giant inflatable waterslide. One youth said, “Oh my God, we ate so much watermelon. It was perfect for the occasion and it was so sweet.”

Watermelon harvest season is in full swing in South Texas and the Evins Volunteer Council was able to purchase plenty for the youth. Some of the criteria to qualify to attend were no major

rule violations, working all aspects of program and remaining in proper dress code.



Ayres House Family Day

Ayres House in San Antonio marked the conclusion of the school year by hosting its annual family day event the Walter Gaskin Picnic on June 4. This annual event is sponsored by the Volunteer Council for Texas Youth and SA Northwest Civil & Social who have a long distinguished history supporting Ayres House in memory of one of their founders and TJJD supporters, Walter C. Gaskin. This event allows the volunteers, the youth and their families to fellowship while enjoying music and barbeque lunch.



Clarence Saucer, Hiram Dalton & JCO Balderas



Mark Harris & Al Harris

Global Youth Service Day Makes Tremendous Impact Across Texas

In April, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department completed its 11th year as a Texas Lead Agency for Global Youth Service Day (GYSD). TJJD enlisted the participation of 34 partners during this year's event, including eighteen juvenile probation departments and a public school district. In addition, our partners engaged 43 public school campuses.

A total of 92 service-learning projects were completed by 10,133 children and youth, and 12,777 hours of service were recorded. There were 153 family members of youth who participated in the projects. TJJD staff estimates that 177,695 Texas citizens benefitted from these service projects in 69 different zip codes across the state. There were 14 media stories that provided coverage and visibility for our GYSD projects. And 29 elected officials participated by issuing proclamations, attending projects, engaging our youth in conversations about social issues, and speaking at opening or celebration events.

Furthermore, the following impact measures were recorded:

- 116,050 Items of food collected and donated
- 112,715 Pounds of food collected and donated
- 5,830 Individuals receiving emergency food from community kitchens, food banks, or nonprofit
- 5,419 Pounds of trash and debris removed
- 4,050 Books or school supplies collected, donated
- 1,834 Pounds of waste reduced, reused, recycled, or composted
- 1,266 Hours served at food bank, food pantry, or kitchen
- 1,224 People educated about the issue of childhood hunger in the community
- 1,101 Meals prepared at kitchen, shelter, or other feeding location
- 400 People registered for food assistance programs (SNAP, Free & Reduced school meals, etc.)
- 399 Backpacks packed and distributed for weekend feeding program
- 335 Individuals engaged in physical activity
- 180 Students gain access to school/education
- 152 Substance abuse, including tobacco, classes organized
- 113 Native trees, shrubs, or other native plants planted
- 90 Animals cared for at animal shelters, etc.
- 82 Adults and youth mentored, tutored, or read to
- 41 Native trees, shrubs, or other native plants maintained
- 37 New adults and youth volunteer mentors, tutors, or readers recruited
- 29 Parks, public lands, habitats, or wilderness areas cleaned or improved, preserved, protected, or created
- 26 Actions supporting military families or veterans
- 22 Food drives or fundraisers organized
- 16 Letters/cards or care packages donated written to active duty troops
- 7 Acres of land and soil restored that were degraded by desertification, drought, and floods
- 5 Acres of harmful invasive vegetation removed
- 5 Classrooms or school spaces physically improved
- 5 Sites cleaned, beautified, and/or painted
- 4 Awareness or education events organized to promote human rights, gender equality, promotion of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, or appreciation of cultural diversity
- 3 Fitness events organized
- 3 Health check-ups or consultations provided



Global Youth Service Day Makes Tremendous Impact Across Texas (con't)

- 3 Handwashing stations constructed
- 3 Community or school gardens planted or created
- 3 Buildings or sites reconstructed, renovated, cleaned-up, or otherwise improved
- 2 Number of housing units developed, repaired, or otherwise improved or made available
- 2 Emergency housing or shelters improved
- 2 Sites monitored to collect data about health of land, water, weather, plant life, or animal life
- 1 Sexual and reproductive health classes organized
- 1 Roads or sidewalks improved to increase safety
- 1 Anti-bullying initiatives organized
- 1 Murals painted or community artwork created

Numbers can certainly communicate the scale of impact in this year's GYSD event, but there are many stories that cannot be told with statistics. Partners shared stories that their youth learned the importance of giving back to the community after spending several hours at an assisted living facility. A halfway house youth said that he was physically tired after working several hours collecting canned food items for the local food bank, but he said he loved doing something good for others and asked about the next opportunity to do so. Other youth learned how one small act of kindness can impact a

whole community of people. GYSD promises to have a lasting impact in the lives of the youth we serve.

Global Youth Service Day, an annual campaign of Youth Service America, celebrates and mobilizes the millions of youth across the globe who improve their communities each day of the year through service and service-learning. The 28th Annual Global Youth Service Day is April 15-17, 2016. Established in 1988, GYSD is the largest service event in the world and is now celebrated in over 100 countries. During GYSD, children and youth address the world's most critical issues in partnership with families, schools, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, and governments.



Youth from TJJD's York Halfway House deliver donations to the Good Samaritan Rescue Mission.



Youth from the El Paso County Juvenile Probation Department beautify their local community, starting with the trash bins at community parks.



Probationers in Bexar County used their mini-grant funds made available through the Texas Community Service Association to purchase materials for blankets, that were later donated to homeless children at the two shelters.



Harlingen ISD administrators and educators receive a plaque from Tamayo Halfway House Staff Ruben Trevino recognizing the 9,115 pounds of canned food items donated during Tamayo's GYSD project.





Erik Estrada Makes Appearance At Frisco Rough Riders Fundraiser

The Student Support Council of the Gainesville State School held a fundraiser at a recent Frisco Rough Riders baseball game. Tickets were \$20 and included wonderful seats, all the hot dogs, brats, chips, peanuts, and Dr. Pepper you can enjoy, and a fireworks presentation. For each ticket sold, \$3 was donated to the Council.

Television star Erik Estrada made a guest appearance and threw out the first pitch. State School employee Corina Almanza enjoyed a photo op with the handsome Estrada.

TJJD’s First Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Vendor Fair

Texas Juvenile Justice Department’s Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program held its inaugural HUB Vendor Fair on Friday, June 17, 2016 in the Lone Star Conference Room at the Austin office. The event is designed to allow HUB vendors to meet face to face with agency personnel. In addition, the meet-and-greet was designed to allow the end users to see who they are buying products and services from.

Many of the vendors at the fair were vendors who contract with TJJD or have products purchased for the agency. Included in the list of vendors at the event were new HUB vendors, looking to start their small business and hoping to make that business connection here at TJJD. A business is considered a HUB if it is:

- A for-profit entity that has not exceeded the size standards prescribed by 34 TAC §20.23, and has its principal place of business in Texas; and
- At least 51% owned by an Asian Pacific American, Black American, Hispanic American, Native American, American Woman and/or Service Disabled Veteran, who reside in Texas and actively participate in the control, operations and management of the entity’s affairs.



Danny Vasquez, HUB Program Specialist and Kenneth Ming, Director of Business Operations and Contract.

At this first TJJD-hosted event, vendors with varying types of businesses included: Elumicor, Cima, Tex-Am Construction, Steel Branding, Urban Circle, Flores and Associates, Victorious Life, Spectrum Technologies, Scooter Rabbit Motivations, and AHI Enterprises. In addition, TXDMV, DIR, TCEQ and DPS HUB Coordinators attended to support TJJD’s HUB Program.

The event showcased a new vendor – Scooter Rabbit Motivations, owned by Mr. Alexander Wright. Mr. Wright is a former professional football player who played for many teams, including the Dallas Cowboys, Oakland Raiders, Saint Louis Rams and was a scout for the New England Patriots in 2000.

Mr. Wright still holds the Cowboy’s record for the longest kickoff return for a touchdown – 102 yards. Coach Wright no longer plays football

but he is very involved in sports including being a certified educator, motivational speaker and a minister at Cornerstone Ministries in San Antonio, Texas.

The TJJD HUB Program is committed to providing opportunities for HUB’s to allow them to grow and prosper in Texas. TJJD staff will strive to improve this event for next year. If you have any suggestions or comments, please forward them to Danny.Vasquez@tjjd.texas.gov.



Lynn Sanchez, from Department of Information Resources stops by the TJJD HUB booth.



Youth Center Director Talks Future

Kevin Mann started position in March 2

This article appeared in the June 2, 2016 edition of the Odessa American

By Nathaniel Miller
nmiller@oaoa.com

Kevin Mann said he had always been interested in a career with criminal justice, but he was not sure on what avenue he wanted to pursue in the field.

Then, in 2002, Mann said a friend told him the Ector County Youth Center needed employees and he applied, being hired to work as a youth center detention officer. It was about a few weeks into the job he said he decided working with at-risk youths was his passion.

"I've always wanted to help kids," Mann said. "This door opened and when I first started working here, I knew criminal justice is where I wanted to go."

The youth center is a detention facility where minors charged with crimes are held. It also houses an education center.

Mann, who now has 14 years of experience with the department, also worked as an intake officer and then as a probation officer before he was selected in March as the director of the youth center, replacing former director Lou Serrano.

Mann, who received a degree in criminal justice and a minor in psychology from the University of Texas of the Permian Basin, said his path to director started when he told Serrano he was interested in becoming more involved in the day-to-day operations of the youth center.

Serrano said Mann's chance, after receiving state training, came when

Serrano applied for one of three newly created positions after the 84th Texas Legislative Session passed Senate Bill 1630 that focuses on trying to keep some convicted youths out of detention facilities.

Now the regional coordinator for the South, West and Panhandle regions with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, Serrano said he still works closely with Mann, adding he is confident in Mann's ability to lead the employees in the youth center and work with the children.



"I think one of the things Kevin brought to the table ... he had some thoughts and ideas on where to improve," Serrano said.

Serrano said his new position allows him to stay in Odessa and Mann said the mentorship between the two has since turned into a friendship. Mann said he still calls Serrano when he has questions.

"Lou was a great mentor," Mann said. "He is a great advocate for kids. To model myself after him is the direction I want to go."

Serrano is not the only person Mann said he relies on for assistance, as another Ector County department director has not only similar experience, but also had the opportunity to know Mann all of his life.

Richard Mann, the director for adult probation, is also Kevin Mann's older brother. Also a graduate of UTPB with a degree in criminal justice, Richard Mann said his relationship with Serrano was great and he hopes to continue working with youth center employees under his brother's leadership.

"If I had a project going on where I needed some officers to knock on doors to check on probationers, he (Serrano) would lend me officers and if they had something going on out there that had to do where adult probation might be involved, we would be out there," Richard Mann said of his relationship with Serrano.

Richard Mann said he and Kevin Mann do talk about work, with Kevin Mann saying he bounces ideas off of his brother about what works and does not work as a director. Of course, as siblings, both said there is still a hint of sibling rivalry.

"We had the basic sibling relationship: He was the older brother and when I outgrew him, he still tried to tell me what to do," Kevin Mann, who is taller than Richard Mann, said with a laugh. "That hasn't changed."

Richard Mann said he still likes to play the role of older brother now and then, but when asked about Kevin Mann's appointment to the position, had nothing but praise for the work his brother has done while an employee with the youth center.

"He takes pride in wherever he's working at," Richard Mann said. "He owns stock in it and he wants it to look good whether he's at the bottom of the totem pole or at the top."





York House Youth Help Clean Corpus Christi Beach

The City of Corpus Christi hosted its annual city-wide event “Beach to Bay Marathon Race” this past May. The rainy conditions didn’t keep away the runners, volunteers, staff and youth from York House who succeeded in cleaning up the five-acre area along the beach in record time. This annual event brought in \$1500 to the Corpus Christi Community Resource Council for Texas Youth to support TJJD youth at York House.

TJJD Implements New Training Curricula on Gang Awareness, Grooming, Suicide Prevention and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury

TJJD has implemented a series of new courses designed to assist staff with additional tools to aid in the successful performance of their jobs. The Juvenile Justice Training Academy (JJTA) will offer Gang Awareness and Grooming to both TJJD staff and probation personnel. Suicide Prevention and Non-Suicidal Self-Injury is specifically targeted to TJJD staff, however, a revised version is currently being developed for probation personnel. These courses will be implemented to all new and tenured staff.

Gang Awareness was developed by the JJTA with the assistance of Office of Inspector General and State Programs and Facilities. This course provides a basic overview of gangs and gang-related behavior, including components of gang membership. Using scenario-based training, it allows participants to determine whether youth behavior is reportable as gang membership or activity. The course also outlines reporting requirements for suspected gang activity. This will be the first of a phased progression of courses in Gang Awareness. At TJJD, each facility will also provide staff with

a presentation by the Office of Inspector General to identify gang related issues and trends that are specific to that facility or region.

Grooming: Are You Vulnerable? was developed by the JJTA with the assistance of the Administrative Investigations and Treatment professionals. This course covers grooming techniques youth use to manipulate staff into compromising their professional ethics and boundaries. This module also reviews the six types of people a groomer may target. Participants self-assess using a checklist to determine their susceptibility to various grooming techniques used by youth. This course also provides staff with information regarding types of errors a staff member makes if being groomed and how to intervene on behalf of one another in an effort to protect staff and stop the grooming process.

Suicide Prevention was developed by the JJTA with the assistance of the Treatment professionals of TJJD. This course introduces new employees to the policies and procedures governing the management of suicidal youth at TJJD. Staff will learn to

identify the warning signs and symptoms found in youth dealing with suicidal behavior and five important points that when applied can help prevent suicide attempts by the youth under the care of the juvenile justice system. Staff will recognize how important a professional attitude is towards helping TJJD youth dealing with suicidal thoughts, actions, and behaviors.

Non-Suicidal Self-Injury was developed by the JJTA with the assistance of the Treatment Division of TJJD. This course explains the difference between non-suicidal self-injury behaviors (NSSI) and suicidal behaviors. Staff will recognize the warning signs and motivating factors of NSSI. Staff will also learn what to do if they manage a youth who is pre-NSSI, committing NSSI, or post NSSI.



For more information, please contact Kristy Almager at 512.490.7125 or Kristy.Almager@tjjd.texas.gov or Chris Ellison at 512.490.7245 or Chris.Ellison@tjjd.texas.gov.



Red Nose Day

Red Nose Day was celebrated by the Ron Jackson Orientation and Assessment Unit May 26, 2016. The money raised through Red Nose Day will help transform the lives of children living in poverty in the U.S. and internationally and supports projects that ensure kids are safe, healthy, and educated. It's a day to be silly and celebrate changing lives.

Top Row Left to Right: Regina Cunningham, Thelma Rodriguez, John Williams; Middle Row Left to Right: Katherine "Nikki" Brown, De Lana Smethers, Ruth Thompson, Karen Trevino, Cheryl Crawford, Guillermina Nieto, Wade Desemar, Elizabeth Rodriguez; Sitting Left to Right: Michael Montgomery, Theresia Balfour and Kegan Oliver



Gainesville Youth Participate in United Way Day of Caring

Youth from the Gainesville State School recently participated in the United Way Day of Caring. Youth were chosen to participate in two projects. One was in Valley View, Texas, where youth painted all the metal work at the community park. They were able to give the park a fresh new look in record time! Youth also traveled to Lindsey, Texas, where they created five new flower beds. These beds are being planted with flowers and shrubs that attract butterflies. These new butterfly gardens are the talk of the town.



Schaeffer House Youth Baptized

TJJJD halfway houses encourage youth to take part in community activities and services. Many youth at the Schaeffer House in El Paso elect to attend worship services at different denominations in the community. In May, several youth chose to be baptized during services at Friendship Baptist Church.



State Volunteer Resource Council Elects New Officers

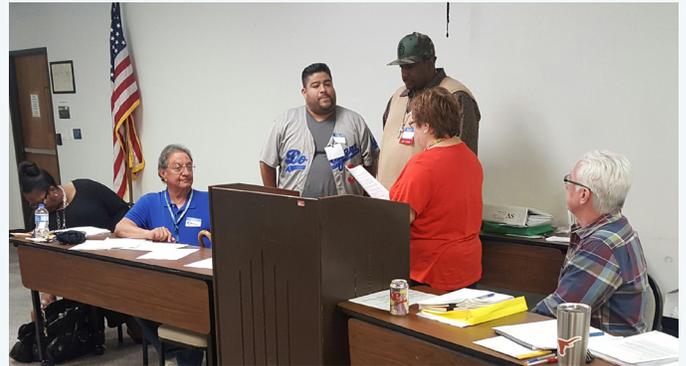
Delegates from the thirteen community resource councils that are affiliated with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department met on May 6 to elect new officers for the State Volunteer Resource Council for Texas Youth. Incumbent officers President Glen Hilton, Vice-President Raul Arredondo, Treasurer Wachelle Williams, and Member-at-Large Glenn Faulk were reelected for another term of service. Juan Quintanilla, a delegate from the Volunteer Council for Texas Youth in San Antonio, was elected as the State Council's Secretary for a two-year term.

Out-going Secretary Sandra Willard, of the McLennan County Community Resource Council, was presented a plaque recognizing her three years of service on the State Council's executive committee. Sandra will continue to serve on the McLennan County Council that provides support and activities at the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility.

The State Volunteer Resource Council was established to support a network of local community resource councils affiliated with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. They meet semi-annually to provide networking opportunities for local delegates. At the May 6th meeting, TJJD Chief of Staff Chelsea Buchholtz presented a "State of the Agency" address to the delegates, who will, in turn, take the information back to their local councils.



Outgoing Secretary Sandra Willard, of the McLennan County Community Resource Council, was presented a plaque recognizing her three years of service on the State Council's executive committee.



Juan Quintanilla, a delegate from the Volunteer Council for Texas Youth in San Antonio, accepts the oath of office after being elected Secretary for the SVRC.

TJJD Staff Trained in National Curriculum on SOGIE

Harris County Juvenile Probation recently received technical assistance through the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention for a Train the Trainer on a curriculum entitled *Towards Equity*. *Toward Equity* is a 25-hour curriculum specifically designed for juvenile justice professionals and provides comprehensive, interactive training lessons

designed to increase competence about sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression, while providing practitioners with increased knowledge, tools, and resources for working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth in the juvenile justice system.

TJJD was able to send two staff

to attend the Train the Trainer to become certified in training the curriculum. TJJD will explore ways on how we can implement all or part of the curriculum to both TJJD staff and probation personnel. The Juvenile Justice Training Academy will provide a formal announcement once the curriculum is able to be implemented.

For more information, please contact Kristy Almager at 512.490.7125 or Kristy.Almager@tjjd.texas.gov or Chris Ellison at 512.490.7245 or Chris.Ellison@tjjd.texas.gov.



Upcoming TJJD Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Trainings

Regional Training (South Texas)

August 23-24, 2016

The University of Houston - Victoria - Victoria, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details.

Trauma Informed Care Training for Trainers

August 30-31, 2016

Nueces County Juvenile Probation - Corpus Christi, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details.

2016 Data Coordinators' Conference

September 12-13, 2016

Embassy Suites Conference Center - San Marcos, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details.

Regional Training (West Central Texas)

September 26-30, 2016

Tom Green County Juvenile Probation - Concho Valley

CSCD - San Angelo, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details or to register.

Training for Trainers: Mandatory Topics for JPO/JSO Basic

October 3-6, 2016 (30.5 Hours)

Tarrant County Juvenile Probation - Ft. Worth, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details.

2016 Chief Probation Officers Conference

October 2-5, 2016

Galveston Convention Center and San Luis Hotel - Galveston, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details or to register.

Strengthening Youth and Families Conference

November 7-10, 2016

Sheraton Arlington Hotel - Arlington, TX

Stay tuned for additional details

30th Annual Juvenile Law Conference

February 27-March 1, 2017

Horseshoe Bay - Marble Falls, TX

Stay tuned for additional details

2017 Chief Probation Officers Conference

October 1-4, 2017 (Hours TBD)

Galveston Convention Center and San Luis Hotel - Galveston, TX

[Click here](#) for additional details or to register.



Upcoming TJJD Sponsored Webinars

The Student Emotional Intelligence Success System for Youth Workers

August 9, 2016 (2.0 Hours)

[Click here](#) to register.

Making Ends Meet: The Practical Nuances of SB 653 and SB 1630

August 11, 2016 (2.0 Hours)

[Click here](#) to register.



Employees Receiving Tenure Awards

TJJD would like to recognize the following employees who have received a tenure award since July 2016. On behalf of the agency, we extend our sincerest gratitude and appreciation for their dedication and service to the State of Texas.

July 2016

FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Alicia L. Sorrells | <i>Austin</i> |
| Amy L. Burns | <i>Gainesville</i> |
| Gita Upreti | <i>Austin</i> |
| Julius Castillo | <i>Giddings</i> |

TEN YEARS OF SERVICE

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Agnes L. Gray | <i>Giddings</i> |
| Daniel L. Newton | <i>Ron Jackson</i> |
| Gavin P. Wallace | <i>Giddings</i> |
| Ismelda K. Huerta | <i>Evins</i> |
| Marian I. Jost | <i>Austin</i> |
| Mildred R. Watkins | <i>McLennan RTC</i> |
| Randy Sterling | <i>McLennan Phoenix</i> |
| Teodulo P. Rios | <i>McFadden Ranch</i> |
| Willie R. Brown | <i>Schaeffer HWH</i> |

FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE

| | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| Carla D. Garza | <i>Gainesville</i> |
| Cheryl Shabazz | <i>McLennan RTC</i> |
| Janet Washington | <i>McLennan RTC</i> |
| Jason D. Holle | <i>McLennan CSJCF</i> |
| Joe D. Petree | <i>Gainesville</i> |
| Lloyd . Serna | <i>Evins</i> |
| Marcus T. Jones | <i>Houston DO</i> |
| Maria M. Jarvis | <i>Gainesville</i> |

TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Alisa J. Simmons | <i>McLennan CSJCF</i> |
| Becky W. Woodruff | <i>Ron Jackson O&A</i> |
| Denise W. Askea | <i>Austin</i> |
| Michael J. Trdy | <i>Giddings</i> |
| Ross G. McQueen | <i>York HWH</i> |
| Troy M. Tomme | <i>Ron Jackson O&A</i> |

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Judy K. Westbrook | <i>Giddings</i> |
|-------------------|-----------------|

