Governor Abbott Appoints Five to Texas Juvenile Justice Board

Governor Greg Abbott has appointed James Castro, Stephanie Moreno, and Allison Palmer and reappointed Pama Hencerling and Jimmy Smith to the Texas Juvenile Justice Board for terms set to expire February 1, 2023. The Board is charged to develop and implement rules to govern the department, executive director, and staff and to establish the mission and set goals for the department to emphasize keeping youth in home communities while balancing rehabilitative needs with public safety.

James Castro of Bergheim is the president and CEO of SAMSAT – San Antonio Museum of Science & Technology and former CEO of St. Peter – St. Joseph Children’s Home. He is licensed as a Professional Counselor, Marriage and Family Therapist and a Professional Counselor Supervisor. He currently serves on the Task Force on Improving Outcomes for Juveniles Adjudicated of Sexual Offenses. He has supported many organizations including, the Texas Alliance of Child Family Services, Knights of Columbus and Boy Scouts of America. Castro received a Bachelor of Science from Franciscan University and a Master of Arts from St. Mary’s University.

Stephanie Moreno of Beeville is the county judge of Bee County. She is a vice president of the Coastal Bend Housing Finance Corp and a member of both the Coastal Bend Council of Governments and the State Bar of Texas. Moreno received a Bachelor of Arts from Texas State University and a Juris Doctor from Western New England School of Law.

Allison Palmer of San Angelo is the district attorney for the 51st Judicial District of Texas. She currently serves on the Task Force on Improving Outcomes for Juveniles Adjudicated of Sexual Offenses and is a member of the National District Attorneys’ Association, Texas District and County Attorneys’ Association and the State Bar of Texas. Palmer received a Bachelor of Arts from The University of Texas and a Juris Doctor from St. Mary’s School of Law.

Pama Hencerling of Victoria is the chief juvenile probation officer of Victoria and Goliad Counties. She is past president of the Texas Institute on Children and Youth and a member of the Central Texas Chiefs Association, Texas Probation Association and the Juvenile Justice Associate of Texas. Hencerling received a Bachelor of Science from Sam Houston State University.

Jimmy Smith of Midland is a commercial realtor and former county commissioner. He chaired the Texas Juvenile Justice Board Trust Committee, was the county representative to the Midland Teen Court, and is currently a reserve deputy for the Midland County Sheriff’s Department. Smith was honorably discharged from the United States Marine Corps.
With the 85th Texas Legislative Session more than halfway complete, much time and energy is spent right now on the decisions being made at the Capitol. Several of us from TJJD are regularly at the Capitol talking about the needs of our system. Many of our county partners and juvenile justice practitioners are doing the same. In February, I testified before the Senate Finance Committee and the House Appropriations Committee to lay out the budget needs for both TJJD and county probation partners. Since that time, each committee has completed their work; in the coming weeks, we will see each bill discussed on the floor of each house.

While I wish I could say we received funding for all of our needs, the unusually tight fiscal climate this session means most of our exceptional item requests did not receive favorable review. The House allows for floor amendments to the budget. This is the only remaining opportunity for substantive changes to the budget before Conference Committee work. We are encouraged by the interest members show in our work and their willingness to continue to meet with us. While it appears that we will face a decrease in funding for probation departments and the state, we continue to meet with members in support of our budget. I encourage you to do the same.

I am happy to report that the Regionalization effort continues to progress. This youth diversion partnership between TJJD and county probation departments is instrumental in keeping more youth out of state placements. As of March 17, we received 164 diversion applications, approved 104, and 88 youth have been placed. We are ahead of our goal to divert at least 150 youth this fiscal year. Youth have been placed at 30 different placement facilities. To date, 53 counties, representing small, medium and large jurisdictions, have participated in Regionalization. This figure is particularly enlightening when you consider that through January of 2017, TJJD commitments have come from 66 counties.

TJJD recently made the difficult decision to close York Halfway House, effective March 31. While I am hesitant to relinquish a step-down resource, the population at York House has been well below capacity for several months. As such, the current fiscal environment necessitated the decision to close. Currently, vacant positions throughout TJJD were offered to interested York House employees. Of the 21 employees at York House, all ten who were interested in continuing employment with TJJD in other locations have been placed in positions.

On a lighter note, during the first week in March, the agency hosted the fourth site visit of the Youth In Custody Practice Model. Approximately 60 staff were in Austin to continue developing a roadmap for implementing best practices in our work. TJJD staff were energetic and engaged and their input, participation and thoughtful commentary were all signs to me of an engaged and committed cadre of professionals never giving up on becoming better at what we do. The level of integration we can achieve knows no limits other than ourselves and I eagerly look forward to the next several months as this all comes together.
Rockwall County Juvenile Services Experiential Education Program

Angie Scalf, the Department Director for Rockwall County Juvenile Services, has been an outspoken advocate for changing the methodology of working with at-risk youth, providing more at-home services for the families, providing free outpatient drug counseling, and using innovative techniques to avoid detention, placement or commitment to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department. The Department, which employs five probation officers and two licensed counselors, provides drug education, supportive outpatient drug counseling, intensive outpatient drug counseling, anger management, family preservation, individual counseling, a 1st Offender Program, a gardening program, in-house community service and Experiential Education.

Rockwall County's Experiential Education Program began with the assistance of Marla Burns, an adventure-based counselor with Williamson County Juvenile Services and Texas State University. Burns facilitated several camp outs with youth and probation officers that set a template for the department to build on and modify to each youth's own needs and strengths.

The goal of the Experiential Education program is for youth to begin the program shortly after being placed on probation and have them participate in all the activities for the entire time they are on probation. Youth report weekly to take part in activities including games, team building activities, and instructional time.

“Every week is a little different depending on what is going on, we try to utilize student holidays, and early release times during the school year,” said Matt Margot, a probation officer that splits his time between the program and being the department's Placement Officer. “One week, we might certify the kids in first aid and CPR, the next we might be teaching fly fishing or bike riding on a nearby trail. We try and have some day trips as well, going to the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens, or going to the nearby park to play Frisbee golf.”

Goals include teaching basic camping skills such as cooking, putting up camp sites, and fire starting and safety. It also includes social skills, character development, and learning to work as a team. Youth are required to give up all electronic equipment once they get out of the vehicle for any camp out.

“I read awhile back that the human mind requires about 72 hours of time away from computers, cell phones, televisions, video games, etc. to actually get anything out of being outdoors, so we try and have at least a three-day, two-night camp out, but prefer the four-to-five-day camp outs instead,” Margot said.

Today Rockwall County is able to serve approximately 15-20 youth a year in the Experiential Education Program. They average about six camp outs a year with an additional five to 10 day trips. The department recently hired Travis Moore, LPC-I, who had made a previous living by Fly Fishing as the General Manager for Tailwaters Fly Fishing Shop. Moore is a Certified Casting Instructor with experience in outdoor education and structured debriefing sessions after activities. Also helping with the program is Joe Klinkovsky, a veteran probation officer who is an avid outdoorsman, hunter and angler.

"Joe’s been a great counterpart these last few years, his outdoor knowledge and skills have been invaluable on these trips,” Margot said. “All the staff that participate in the camping trips have certifications in either Advanced Wilderness 1st Aid or Wilderness 1st Aid, and are certified life guards.”

The program is constantly evolving as staff evaluate what works and what doesn’t. Margot says it’s important to do activities that the kids want to do, not necessarily what you want the kids to do.

Continued on page 4
Rockwall County Juvenile Services Experiential Education Program (con’t)

“The more interactive the better,” he said. “Instead of rock climbing, where it’s usually one kid at a time, and the rest are sitting around watching, we discovered taking a caving tour where we crawl, climb, and squeeze through small spaces in the dark, keeps everyone going. Instead of just simple pier fishing, kids enjoy the challenge of putting on waders and walking out into the middle of a cold flowing river to fly fish.”

Margot noted that last June, Rockwell County staff took a group of boys to Garner State Park, outside of Concan, Texas, where the group was able to hike to the top of the hill each morning, spend the day swimming and staying cool, and then each evening going to a local dance, which provided an opportunity to address social skills and proper etiquette when asking a young lady to dance.

“It was a great success, and we immediately made plans to visit again in 2017,” Margot said. “We plan to have the boys take some dance lessons this year so they are a little more prepared for the dance. The boys we took in June have declared their plans to revisit Garner State Park after they get off probation.”

While the Experiential Education Program operates on a minimum budget, staff at the Rockwall County Juvenile Services believe the future of the program is bright. The county hopes to apply for a TPWD COOP Grant to replace old and worn out gear and add some new components to the program.

According to Margot, “I genuinely think for all of us, the Experiential Education Program is the best part of our jobs. We get to interact with the kids in a way unlike we normally would as probation officers. They let their guard down and realize that we only want the best for them.”

Families Voice Their Opinion

In 2008, TJJD began an annual family survey to determine how families feel about their child’s rehabilitation progress. The survey is available on the TJJD website and allows families to rate various issues such as education, medical care, case management, youth safety, and other areas of interest. The survey has also been provided to family members during visitation weekends and through mail outs. Survey results provide information on family views and provide guidance for areas of improvement.

In 2016, the agency collected 457 responses from family members across the state. 386 responses were in English and 71 in Spanish.

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<th>Topic 2016</th>
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<td>My child is making progress in education.</td>
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<td>My child receives the necessary medical treatment.</td>
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<td>I get timely responses to my questions about my child’s medical care.</td>
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<td>I am notified in a timely manner when my child is seriously sick or injured.</td>
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<td>The case manager has involved me in my child’s ICP and the planning for return to the community.</td>
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<td>TJJD is helping my child make positive changes.</td>
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<td>I am able to reach staff when I have questions.</td>
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<td>Families are treated with respect when they visit TJJD facilities.</td>
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<td>Grievances that my child has filed are handled in a timely and fair manner.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>My child is safe at current TJJD facility.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>My child is given the opportunity to worship in the religion of his/her choice.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>The family liaison assists me in communicating my child’s needs to other TJJD staff.</td>
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Youth and Shelter Dogs Team Up to Rise Above Troubled Pasts and Help Others in Nation’s Only Juvenile Justice Service Dog Training Program

Youth incarcerated at the Ron Jackson facility in Brownwood, Texas, got a rare and well-earned opportunity for a field trip to reunite with service dogs they had trained when the dogs first emerged from their own humble beginnings at Texas animal shelters.

On January 11, 2017, four boys in the program, along with staff from Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD), traveled three and a half hours to Dripping Springs, Texas, near Austin, to visit the campus of Service Dogs, Inc. The boys and other TJJD youth have been working with trainers from Service Dogs, Inc for over a year in the nation's first and only juvenile offender service dog training program.

Youth in the PAWS program at Texas Juvenile Justice Department’s Ron Jackson facility in Brownwood, Texas live with and train shelter dogs adopted by Service Dogs, Inc. to prepare them for advanced training.

Youth in the PAWS program at Texas Juvenile Justice Department’s Ron Jackson facility in Brownwood, Texas live with and train shelter dogs adopted by Service Dogs, Inc. to prepare them for advanced training

Youth in the PAWS program (Pairing Achievement With Service) have been living with and training shelter dogs for pet adoption since 2010,” explains PAWS administrator and dog trainer for TJJD Cris Burton, M.Ed. “Youth must pass a psychological screening and have enough time left to work with the dogs through the 9-12 week training program.”

Burton discovered Service Dogs, Inc. when he attended a weeklong workshop at their Academy for Professional Dog Trainers. After the workshop, he approached Service Dogs, Inc. about a partnership.

For more than a year, trainers from Service Dogs, Inc. have traveled to the Ron Jackson campus once a month and held bi-weekly conference calls with the youth to monitor the dogs’ progress. “They are operating at a very sophisticated level of training,” says Al Kordowski, Director of Training at Service Dogs, Inc.

At Service Dogs, Inc. training center in January, the boys met the disabled clients, both injured veterans, who were receiving two of the service dogs they had helped train. They also hopped into wheelchairs and took the dogs through Service Dogs, Inc’s canine behavior obstacle course, a task usually not undertaken by professional dog trainers or SDI clients until the third day of a week’s worth of training. Even more significantly, this was the first time the youth had worked dogs from a wheelchair.

“Their skill level was superior to many professional trainers who apply for jobs here,” said Sheri Soltes, Founder and President of Service Dogs, Inc. “We have been interviewing candidates for an associate trainer position. After seeing him in action, we would love to hire Brandon, who is about to complete his sentence.”

The program has proven to be a win-win for the youth, the dogs, the organizations involved and even the community.

“Their skill level was superior to many professional trainers who apply for jobs here,” said Sheri Soltes, Founder and President of Service Dogs, Inc.

“With dogs, it’s not about only enforcing the dog’s behavior,” he says. “You learn to decrease the dog’s canines help them connect to their unmet needs and their risk factors. The kids must be able to identify their unmet needs, such as feeling acceptance and belonging. They put their dog in their spot – the dog has unmet needs, maybe it’s been hurt – and it helps the youth understand.”

The youth follow a strict schedule of waking up at 5:00 am, taking the dogs out to toilet, bonding with them, then breakfast, school and other activities and lights out at 9:00 pm.

“I’ve gotten used to the structure,” says Brandon, who had been in the program for over a year and left TJJD at the end of January. “I’ve learned it’s going to be that way anywhere I go. This is going to help me in the long run. Plus, I get to do things I’ve never done before like visit here and go to Barktoberfest (a rescue dog event in Austin).”

Xavier has been in the PAWS program for almost a year. He says the program has taught him how to face his problems and overcome them by starting a conversation.

Continued on page 6
risk factors. Those are things like criminal thinking. Like the dog seeing a squirrel and thinking, 'I'm fixing to go after that squirrel.' When you use positive reinforcement to teach them, their skills go up and their risk factors go down."

"I've learned how to express my feelings in a positive way," he says. "It's not always about looking for a fight or picking up a gun to express your feelings. You learn how to forgive so you're not stuck in a dark place. If you don't, you're always going to have that criminal mentality. Life is not about taking someone's life."

"It's been really good for me," says Nicolas, who has been in the program for a year and four months. "I like it because we use positive reinforcement. You can't be mean to the dogs. You learn patience and empathy, putting yourself in the dogs' shoes so you can understand their feelings. If the dog is having trouble, you give them a break so they can deal with their frustration, then you come back to it."

Service Dogs, Inc. adopts dogs from animal shelters and rescue organizations and trains them to help individuals living with deafness or mobility challenges. The 29-year old nonprofit provides the dogs free of charge and is supported through donations. The Ron Jackson facility can house and train twenty dogs, doubling Service Dogs, Inc's capacity to train dogs for deaf and mobility challenged clients, thus significantly shortening the waiting list for a dog. TJJD and Service Dogs, Inc. are expanding the program to two additional facilities in Gainesville and Giddings this year.

Doug Fullerton received Anakin, a black Labrador retriever who was one of the first service dogs trained by the youth. A naval officer, Olympic trial athlete in multiple sports, MBA graduate of Duke University and father of two, Doug suffers from debilitating seizures that occur approximately every six weeks.

"I thought I had lost nearly everything that defined me. I was a significant athlete – gone. I was a young, significant career businessman – gone. Finally, I was a husband and father – nearly gone. I will never swim competitively again, compete in an area 10k running race hoping for a medal, turn a double-play on a hard-hit grounder, nor take another company public. My hands don't have the dexterity or control to play Billy Joel songs on the piano anymore, I don't have the endurance to hike to Machu Picchu with my wife (she went in August by herself), nor does my health allow me to go back onto the Board of any company," wrote Doug in a letter to the PAWS administration after meeting them and the boys at Service Dogs, Inc's training center. "However, I can now struggle through the episodes, I have the opportunity to positively engage in my sons’ lives (both in and out of school), I have the chance to be a better husband – both by providing my wife with more independence and by contributing more to the household (from chauffeur service to taking Heather out to dinner), and I can return to my men's group Bible Study through the church.

"A great deal of the PAWS effort is never seen by those that have sacrificed in service to others, but please make no mistake, your program is highly valued, discussed, and significantly changing lives for the better ... specifically, me, in this case. Additionally, you have allowed my children to have significant activities in their lives that had previously been curtailed. Anakin’s presence, thanks to you and your program, has a very significant ripple effect that is hard to track, yet has an impact upon lives far-ranging in this country and potentially even the world."

"This is the best day of my life," Each boy got to pick out two Service Dogs, Inc. t-shirts as a thank you gift. Service Dogs, Inc. hopes to hire some of them as trainers in the future.
Mart Makeover Welcomes Families

Visitors to the McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility (Mart) campus will be greeted in a more welcoming gatehouse lobby in an effort to make the facility more family friendly. In addition to new and more soothing paint, more comfortable chairs and couches have been provided.

The family visitation area was also repainted and a reading center and interactive play area were created for younger children to play in and youth who have children here could sit with their child and read them a book. More than 200 books were ordered – 100 in English and 100 in Spanish.

Staff have been supportive of this renewed push toward family engagement and a family friendly environment. Staff appreciate the new color schemes and welcoming environment and parents have commented how much easier it is to visit their kids in a more family friendly environment rather than a correctional environment.

Gainesville State School Family Day

On January 19, 2017, Gainesville State School hosted Breakfast and Bingo for the Gainesville youth and their families as well as their mentors. Youth and family members enjoyed breakfast, played bingo, took pictures and enjoyed visiting with one another. A total of 100 people were in attendance for this event.

The Gainesville Student Support Council sponsored the event and provided the meal, bingo prizes, and photographs for both the youth and the family. Due to the great success of the event, Gainesville State School plans on making this an annual event.

Family members visit with their youth at the Breakfast and Bingo event.
Parole Officer Ricardo Leal is retiring in October 2017 after 35 years of service to the state and the juvenile justice field. He began his career with the former Texas Youth Commission in 1983, serving as a youth activity supervisor at the Giddings State School, Tamayo Halfway House and Beto Halfway House. In 1994, Ricardo made the change to become a parole officer, a position he has held for the past 24 years.

Ricardo said many of his best memories are meeting young men and women who he once supervised that are now living productive lives in the community.

“I’ve had 35- to 45-year-old men and women approach me in the community, introducing me to their families and sharing their life stories,” he said. “After those conversations, they’ll ask if I recognize them. Some of them are now in the medical, educational or law enforcement fields.”

Ricardo said some of the biggest changes he’s seen during his career revolve around technology and the ability to connect youth with community resources. He also sees a difference in the youth in TJJD today compared to youth he once worked with.

“Today’s youth and family have more needs and challenges that need to be addressed while their son or daughter is in placement.”

Ricardo’s advice to young parole officers just starting out today is simple: “Be patient, resourceful, always professional, and be able to adjust to change.”

The thing Ricardo will miss most when he steps away from the job is the ability to empower families to connect with community resources that will help their youth succeed back in the community. He plans on spending his time with his family and traveling. He’s also looking forward to taking his grandchildren to educational activities. He is also hoping to be able to work part-time or volunteer at the local school district with at-risk students.

Ricardo’s friends and co-workers all wish him continued success as starts this new phase of his life. He will be greatly missed by all but the impact he has had on so many lives will continue.
TJJD Implements New On-the-Job Training Material

TJJD targeted an on-going effort to enhance new hire and professional development among direct care staff. In January, the agency implemented new or substantially revised on-the-job training (OJT) modules for juvenile correctional officers (JCO) and case managers. The goals of the new curricula were to establish a consistent pattern for on-the-job training from facility to facility and to enhance the quality of material by making it practical and relevant to what staff need to know in order to be successful in their day to day job. At the end of each module, both JCOs and case managers will be required to successfully demonstrate competency, proficiency, and performance before completing the program.

For **JCOs**, approximately 112 hours of OJT is provided upon hire. The new or rewritten classroom OJT modules include:

- Creating Opportunities for Successful Youth Outcomes
- Emergency Situations
- Managing the Dorm
- Professional Conduct in the Workplace
- Security and Control

TJJD has also enhanced or developed new Daily Observation Reports for each module. This was a collaborative effort between the Juvenile Justice Training Academy (JJTA) and the Field Training Officers (FTOs) with the desire to make a more efficient process for incoming staff.

In response to feedback received for additional coaching and mentoring within the first year of employment, the JJTA worked with the FTOs and the JCO supervisors to establish an additional 55 hours of on-the-job training within the first six months of being approved for sole supervision. The training will be specific to the most critical needs determined by each facility. The supervisors will also be responsible for doing a satisfaction assessment with each new JCO within the same six-month period.

For **case managers**, new material was developed and includes 26 modules that cover approximately 60 hours of on-the-job training. This was a joint effort with the JJTA, however, completed largely in part by Specialized Treatment staff Crystal Drew and Emily Shaw.

A Training for Trainers was provided for both the JCO and case manager on-the-job training. The agency looks forward to assessing the intended outcome of further developing staff competencies and identifying whether it is assisting with reducing turnover, lowering the number of incidents, and better integrating new hire staff into a facility environment.

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**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**

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Keeping Families Informed

The Family Supports Department has obtained a new strategy to keep families informed of happenings in the agency. A family newsletter is being published on a quarterly basis. The first edition was released in July of 2016. Departments from across the agency are providing information that is helping families stay connected to their youth. The newsletter is available on the TJJD webpage and is mailed to each youth’s home address. The newsletter is entitled The Family Connection and is published in English and Spanish. The link to the English copy of the newsletter is accessed at the bottom of the Family Services page using the link below.

[www.tjjd.texas.gov/programs/family_support_services.aspx](http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/programs/family_support_services.aspx)
Grant N – The Rest of the Story

By Doug Vance, PhD, Advisory Council Chair

Many readers may recall when the TJJD Mental Health Grant (Grant N) was first made available during the FY 2014-2015 Biennium. The purpose was to provide funding to juvenile probation departments in order to increase mental health services and to supplement existing mental health services to juveniles. What readers may not be aware of however, is the vitally important role the Advisory Council played in helping establish the need for this funding, which is – “The Rest of The Story.”

In 2013, in order to help juvenile probation departments justify a need for mental health funding, the Advisory Council was asked to develop a comprehensive description of children with mental illness in the juvenile justice system. The assignment was given to the Advisory Council’s Mental Health Committee chaired by Doug Vance, and consisting of members Carrie Barden, Randy Turner, Mark Williams, and their TJJD Chief Financial Officer Bill Monroe.

The Committee’s first task was to identify an agreed upon list of serious mental health disorders that youth within the juvenile justice system are commonly diagnosed with.

The list was codified as follows:

- Intellectual Disability Disorders
- Persuasive Developmental Disorders
- Elimination Disorders
- Psychotic Disorders
- Mood Disorders
- Anxiety Disorders
- Dissociative Disorders
- Paraphilias
- Eating Disorders.
- ADHD

The inclusion of ADHD in the list is due to the fact that the child’s level of functioning is often significantly delayed relative to chronological age, and as such many times have significant difficulty complying with rules and structural rigor common to a correctional setting without more intensive supports. The impulsivity associated with an ADHD diagnosis and the other related cognitive deficits often lead to aggressive acting out and even impulsive suicide attempts.

It was also understood that given the prevalence of trauma exposure within the juvenile justice population and growing interest in the relationship between trauma and delinquency, there is a more far-reaching impact of trauma in children that extend beyond official PTSD symptom criteria to include neurological impacts, self-regulation deficits, and severe attachment/relationship problems.

The Committee suggested that these trauma-related symptoms combined with the often maladaptive attempts at coping, often times lead to a high percentage of the mental health crises in juvenile justice facilities.

The Committee also acknowledged the reality that justice-involved youth rarely meet criteria for only one disorder. They typically have multiple co-existing diagnoses, including those listed here, as well as substance abuse, which result in added complexity of the case.

In our analysis, it was also critical that we acknowledged the importance of family in the treatment process suggesting that the biggest predictor of treatment effectiveness relates to family engagement in the intervention. Justice involved families face many challenges that impact the mental health status of the child. In order to effectively treat the child it may be necessary to assist the family in developing the necessary support system so that they are more able to devote the time and energy required to properly help their child. The severity of the symptomology and maladaptive behavior as described above result in a need for more intensive treatment than is commonly available, without added funding, within many juvenile probation departments.

Concerning complexities of treatment, the Committee suggested the following to be essentials of effective treatment:

- Increased collaboration among different treatment providers and child-serving systems involved in the case;
- Heightened attention to continuity of care efforts to ensure that all treatment needs continue to be met as the child moves through the juvenile justice system or between systems;
- Recruitment and retention of highly qualified

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Grant N – The Rest of the Story (con’t)

treatment providers capable of providing comprehensive treatment for the broad range of diagnoses.

Additionally, the Committee recognized that justice involved youth often times have a history of intermittent treatment or insufficient treatment in the community and efforts to obtain appropriate services are often complicated by:

- The presence of multiple co-existing diagnoses (i.e. mental health, substance abuse, and intellectual). Because these various diagnoses interact with each other, the child needs comprehensive, integrated treatment services capable of addressing all of the issues. Unfortunately, this kind of treatment is rarely available in the community. The result is often a sequential approach to treatment which is far less effective and increases the risk for the child falling through the cracks at transition points.
- Lack of recognition and understanding of the complex mental health needs, both in the family and in the various child-serving agencies working with the child.
- Lack of resources and support systems to facilitate the type of intensive intervention that is needed.

After much review, research, and discussion, the Advisory Council was ultimately successful in its efforts to help juvenile probation departments establish a clearly defined and succinct need for additional mental health funding, and as we all are now aware, significant state appropriations were soon to follow.

And now you know - “The Rest of The Story.”

TJJD Implements Revised Curriculum for Juvenile Probation and Supervision Officer Basic Training

TJJD’s Juvenile Justice Training Academy (JJTA) recently released revised curriculum for three mandatory topics to be used for juvenile probation and supervision officer basic training. The new materials include the full curriculum on Officer Safety and Mechanical Restraints, Customized Case Design, and Suicide Prevention and Intervention. The JJTA worked with the regional training officers, select field subject matter experts and internal technical authorities for input and review of the approved material. This new material should be used when training officers for certification.

Officer Safety and Mechanical Restraints is a 3.5 hour course that provides an overview of safety considerations when supervising juveniles in and out of an office setting. Participants will examine the proper application of mechanical restraints via scenario-based learning. This course is intended for juvenile probation officers.

Customized Case Design is a 5.5 hour course that considers fundamental concepts necessary for customized case design. Case management principles, including effective documentation and setting goals will be examined and participants will further create a case plan based on the newly implemented Texas Administrative Code standards. This course is designed for juvenile probation officers.

Suicide Prevention and Intervention is a 2.0 hour course that provides an overview of adolescent suicide through an examination of interventions that can be used to provide guidance and support for juveniles struggling with suicidal thoughts and feelings. This course is designed for both juvenile probation officers and juvenile supervision officers.

The new materials may be found online at TJJD’s JJTA Training Resources, or by clicking here (http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/trainingresources/login.aspx). When accessing the page, the curriculum is found under the respective “Mandatory Curriculum” and links to the lesson plan, participant guide, powerpoint presentation, and other applicable documents are available.

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
PAWS K-9 Adoption

For Adoption Information
Please Contact
Holli Fenton at 325-641-4260
or
Corinne T. Smith Animal Center at 325-646-0617

A special THANK YOU to our sponsors!
Ag-Mart
Dr. Joe Speck, DVM
Brownwood Women’s Club
Corinne T. Smith Animal Center
Cottrell House Youth Teaching Lessons

Cottrell House youth recently had the rare opportunity to provide guidance to future juvenile justice workers currently studying at the University of Texas at Arlington. TJJD youth eagerly participated in a learning session, making an impact with people who are interested in helping juveniles make better decisions.

The Cottrell House youth provided the UTA students with background information on why youth commit crimes. Youth informed students that committing crimes is a learned behavior, usually from family members or friends. Youth CG encouraged students remain positive and be patient when working with juveniles.

Youth DJ told students that he has made positive changes to his life and now he is ready to go home. He says that he has learned to control himself and think before he acts. DJ told the group that he plans on joining the military once he is released from TJJD. Youth JL told students that he made several mistakes in the past by not listening to the people that were trying to help him. He says that he now understands the value of what people were trying to do for and with him.

Youth IV advised students that gangs are dangerous and the end results will always be negative. The TJJD youth then spent quality time mentoring the students in small groups.

Employees and their supervisors are encouraged to become familiar with the Training Procedure Manual found on TJJD’s intranet. 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.

TJJD’s Juvenile Justice Training Academy Adopts New Policies Related to Staff Training Requirements

TJJD’s Juvenile Justice Training Academy (JJTA) recently adopted a new Training Procedure Manual as well as revisions to the Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual as it relates to TJJD employees and their supervisors knowing and adhering to training-related requirements. TJJD provides training for employees to meet state and federal laws and to ensure that employees are successful in the performance of their job duties. Highlights of these new policies include:

- Identifying specific responsibilities of the JJTA, a TJJD employee, and their supervisor.
- Describing the process for establishing that an employee has sole-supervision status.
- Defining the competency threshold for considering a staff to successfully complete a course to include a score of 70% or higher; for written tests, except for CPR, first aid, and AED, which require a score of 80% or higher; or a demonstration of competency of the required skills, as determined by the training specialist, for hands-on tests.
- Clarifying that for courses with a competency-based test, employees are given two attempts to pass the test.
- Describing classroom expectations for employees attending training.
- Defining the time frames and applicable grace period for receiving required training and subsequent actions if an employee fails to fulfill their training obligations for new hire training, annual training, or training required as a result of a transfer of job function.
- Establishing guidelines for providing routine methods that will be used to assess the training needs of TJJD employees.

Employees and their supervisors are encouraged to become familiar with the Training Procedure Manual found on TJJD’s intranet. 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.
TJJD Begins Piloting Juvenile Supervision Officer Certification Exam

TJJD began piloting the juvenile supervision officer certification exam. The pilot will be conducted over a six-month period and the exam will not be required for certification until September 1, 2017. TJJD worked with the Regional Training Officers statewide, along with the Chapter 344 subgroup of the Advisory Council, to develop the first of three rounds of questions that will be used for the new automated exam. The purpose of the pilot is similar to the JPO certification exam and provides an opportunity to gain statistics on wording, timing, appropriateness of questions, etc.

- During the pilot, TJJD will switch out 50 questions at a time, each for two months, over the six-month period (for a total of potentially 150 questions that will be in the pool of questions).
- TJJD will send another email in April when the next group of 50 questions is piloted.
- The JSO exam will be a 50-question test with multiple choice, true/false and matching questions.
- The JSO exam is a timed, 60-minute exam.
- For purposes of the pilot, a department may choose to test any existing or new staff. The more individuals taking the exam, the better.
- The pilot will be for data collection only and not to give official credit for passing the exam.
- The passing threshold will remain 70%.
- There will be no exam fee associated with taking the JSO exam, neither during the pilot or once live.

TJJD is in need of departments or facilities to assist with the pilot. One of the best ways to prepare staff for the certification exam is to ensure that all departments or facilities are using the most current training material from TJJD’s Training Resource webpage. During the pilot, departments or facilities will not be required to “proctor” the exam until the live exam is implemented beginning September 2017. The same rules will apply for those proctors as with the JPO certification exam.

Those interested in assisting TJJD with taking the pilot may access the exam online [here](https://www.classmarker.com/online-test/start/?quiz=rte5894c56c919a1). As of the end of February, 163 individuals attempted the test statewide, with an average score of 85.6% and an average of 18 minutes to complete the exam.

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
TJJD Partners with the Juvenile Law Section to Host 30th Annual Juvenile Law Conference

On February 27-March 1, the Juvenile Law Section of the State Bar of Texas sponsored the 30th Annual Juvenile Law Conference in Horseshoe Bay. TJJD’s Juvenile Justice Training Academy coordinated the conference in partnership with the Juvenile Law Section and welcomed approximately 400 juvenile justice professionals from across the state. The agenda focused on the 50th anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court case *In Re: Gault* and was specifically designed to give practitioners the latest and most pertinent information relevant to juvenile justice in Texas. During the conference, distinguished professionals presented on various topics that benefited all facets of professionals wanting to enhance the juvenile justice system. Collectively, speakers demonstrated great passion and enthusiasm in their ability to share their knowledge and expertise.

For the third year, the Juvenile Law Section hosted disciplinary caucuses with facilitated discussion. These caucuses provide a means to network within an individual’s personal discipline and discuss best practices, current issues, and share trends within the scope of his or her functional area to support a continued dialogue for ways to implement an overall improved system.

The Juvenile Law Section honored Laura Parker with the Robert O. Dawson Visionary Leadership Award. Nominations were submitted by members of the Juvenile Law Section and is given to an individual who has unselfishly devoted time to the cause of juvenile justice in Texas. Laura Parker, who served for 17 years as the District Court Judge for the 386th District Court in Bexar County, has been an advocate for juveniles in Texas and her efforts advanced the development of innovative juvenile justice programs. As District Judge, she presided over three specialty courts including Restore Court for adolescent victims of human sex trafficking, the 386th Drug Court for drug dependent youth, and Crossroads, a mental health program for girls.

This year also marked the 30th anniversary of the Juvenile Law Section and this milestone was celebrated with a fun-filled anniversary party. The Juvenile Law Foundation, a newly created 501(c)(3), hosted a golf tournament and silent auction to raise funds for providing college scholarships to kids involved in the juvenile justice system. This year, the Foundation raised over $13,000 to help support those scholarships.

TJJD and the Juvenile Law Section would like to thank everyone who attended, and is looking forward to hosting the 31st Annual Juvenile Law Conference. For more information, please contact Kristy Almager at 512.490.7125 or Kristy.Almager@tjjd.texas.gov.
Upcoming TJJD Sponsored or Co-Sponsored Trainings

**Motivational Interviewing**  
March 29-30, 2017 (16.0 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) for additional details or to register

**JPO Basic**  
April 23-28, 2017 (40 Hours)  
Sam Houston State - Huntsville, TX  
[Click here](#) for additional details or to register

**Foundation Skill for Trainers**  
May 1-5, 2017 (40 Hours)  
Sam Houston State - Huntsville, TX  
[Click here](#) for additional details or to register

**Post-Legislative Conference**  
July 31 - August 1, 2017 (Hours TBD)  
Omni Southpark Hotel - Austin, TX  
Conference, Hotel, and Registration Information will be available in late April

**Budget Workshop**  
August 2, 2017 (Hours TBD)  
Omni Southpark Hotel - Austin, TX  
Conference, Hotel, and Registration Information will be available in late April

Links to these trainings can be found on the TJJD website at [http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/regionaltraining/tjjd_trainings.aspx](http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/regionaltraining/tjjd_trainings.aspx)

Upcoming TJJD Sponsored Webinars

**Understanding Risk-Needs-Responsivity and Target Population**  
March 28, 2017 (2.00 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) to register

**Education and Juvenile Justice Training Project: Module 13- Special Education: Our Responsibilities, Our Requirements**  
March 30, 2017 (1.50 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) to register

**Defining your Problem Statement, Goals and Outcomes**  
April 5, 2017 (2.00 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) to register

**Defining Program Activities, Program Fidelity, and Program Outputs**  
April 18, 2017 (2.00 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) to register

**Process Evaluations for your Programs**  
May 9, 2017 (2.00 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) to register

**Outcome Evaluations for your Programs**  
May 16, 2017 (2.00 Hours)  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department - Austin, TX  
[Click here](#) to register

Links to these webinars can be found on the TJJD website at [http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/regionaltraining/webinars.aspx](http://www.tjjd.texas.gov/regionaltraining/webinars.aspx)
Employees Receiving Tenure Awards

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

December 2016

FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE
George N. Ervin Jr.  Gainesville
Larry D. Jackson  Gainesville
Brent L. Baker  McLennan

TEN YEARS OF SERVICE
Michel Brown  Cottrell HWH
Jeffery J. Johnson  McLennan
Dilcy A. Freeman  Ron Jackson
Anton L. Boweware  McLennan
Kala T. Green  Giddings

FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE
Tonya K. Mason  Brownwood HWH
Wanona Posas  Giddings

TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE
Patricia O. Daniels  Giddings

FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE
Steven Vargas  Austin-Construction & Engineering
Bobby R. Peoples  McLennan
Sylvia A. Waters  Giddings
Sandra K. Guillery-Cyr  Willoughby HWH
Kevin J. Arguello  McLennan
Meagan E. Hildreth  Gainesville
Brenda L. Trojanoski  Schaeffer HWH
Oscar Reyes  Evins
Adrian Santos Jr.

TEN YEARS OF SERVICE
Terri J. Cross  Ron Jackson
Austin W. Herridge  Ron Jackson

FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE
Stephen D. Rehberg  Austin-IT
Tommy W. Ewing  Giddings
Christopher B. Feagins  Ron Jackson
Carmen A. Eisler  Giddings
Arturo Ayala  Evins

TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE
Richard K. Hearn  Region 2 West

January 2017

FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE
Minnie L. Rivers  Austin–Youth Services Contracts
Leonel Martinez Jr.  Evins
Danielle S. Duvall Gilbert  Giddings
Marquisse D. Jones  Ron Jackson

FIFTEEN YEARS OF SERVICE
Richard K. Hearn  Region 2 West

TEN YEARS OF SERVICE
Terri J. Cross  Ron Jackson
Austin W. Herridge  Ron Jackson

THIRTY YEARS OF SERVICE
Alan F. Walters  Austin–Executive Office
### February 2017

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|                      | Jose G. Sanchez Jr. | Giddings    |