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**Inside this issue:**

2010 Session Winding Down	2
Foundation Scholarship Opportunity	2
Florida Adopts Forecasting Technology	2
David Barnes Named Youth Ambassador	3
Report Calls for Use of Positive Youth Development Approaches in Juvenile Justice	3
U.S. Department of Justice Reports	4
In the News	4
Research & Policy Update Links	4
Calendar of Events	5
FJJA Calendar	5
Member News	5,6
FJJA Retreat Information	6

## Youth Success Day Highlights Achievements of Juvenile Justice Youth

This month, agencies across the state serving juvenile justice involved youth joined together as part of annual Children’s Week in Tallahassee. Children’s Week also included Juvenile Justice Youth Success Day, held on Wednesday April 14<sup>th</sup> to highlight the successes of youth.

Emphasizing the strong partnerships between the Department of Juvenile Justice and providers, faith based and community organizations, Youth Success Day included local events throughout the state. In Tallahassee, two young adults were honored for turning their lives around. Sequoria Williams, a recipient of the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation’s Youth Investment Award Scholarship, is now attending



*David Barnes, Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp and Sequoria Williams*

Tallahassee Community College with plans to go on to nursing school. Addressing the crowd, that included DJJ Secretary Frank Peterman and Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp, Sequoria thanked her mother for supporting her efforts and future goals.

FJJA was proud to work with member agencies HBI and G4S to honor David Barnes, a recent graduate of Avon Park Youth Academy, who was recognized for his achievements. David earned his GED while at Avon Park, and while working with the Home Builder’s Institute, received his Pre-Apprenticeship State Certificate of Training in landscaping. While David was at Avon Park, he also worked with a faith based partner, Youth for Christ.

Home Builder’s Trustee and Florida home builder Bill Paul knows how successful the (HBI) Project CRAFT program is when working with youth in the Florida juvenile justice system, saying, “Project CRAFT is a comprehensive rehabilitation program that teaches students the specific skills they need to compete in the employment market and David Barnes is another wonderful example of the effectiveness of this training.”

Kerry Knott, CEO of G4S, who operates Avon Park Academy, said “Change is not always easy. To change your circumstances you need to change your thinking, you need to acquire new skills and knowledge, and change your subsequent actions. David took advantage of the opportunities afforded to him during his commitment to DJJ and Avon Park Youth Academy. It is clear David is on the path of success. We are very proud of him.”

David is currently pursuing enrollment at a technical college and attends church regularly with his family. He receives follow up services through Home Builders Institute and is applying for a Youth Investment Award Scholarship from the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation.

**2010 Annual  
Retreat  
June 14-16  
Casa Marina  
Resort, Key West  
See page 6 for  
more information.**

**The FJJA Newsletter is published monthly**

Cathy Craig-Myers, Editor  
Lynn Redmond, Publisher

**Deadline is the 4<sup>th</sup> of each month**

Send your news to  
[lynn@fjja.org](mailto:lynn@fjja.org)

### 2010 Legislative Session Winding Down

The governor will soon sign the Gambling compact, which will infuse over \$ 1 billion dollars into the state budget over the next 5 years. This year, a much needed \$435 million from this agreement will help to balance the budget.

However, the reality that the FMAP funding will not make it down from Washington before session end has sunk in, and is a major game changer. The House had stayed firm in the decision to not include the federal funding in their allocations, but the Senate had spread that money in "back of the bill" amendments.

At the beginning of budget conference, only \$115 million of the anticipated \$880 million was earmarked to plug holes in the budget with the rest (if it arrives) included in the reserves for next year. As the newsletter goes to print, legislators are racing to meet the deadline for session end on time, with many running for re-election or other elected positions.

### Major Reform

This session has been filled with controversial reform bills. The Education reform bill, raced through and past some committees and ultimately was vetoed by the Governor following a backlash from unions and teachers.

Medicaid reform will be no different. The bill was fast tracked through the House and now heads to the Senate for conference discussions. The House version targets Miami Dade as the first county in what will be a 5 year all county plan to reduce the soaring costs of Medicaid through implementation of managed care.

As the Medicaid reform discussions progressed, and with current costs spiraling, legislators argued they were addressing the reality that the current Medicaid system will go bankrupt in the next few years. Critics, however, say that the expansion of managed care to the majority of the state's Medicaid recipients will result in less quality care for Florida's low-income citizens.

As the newsletter goes to print, it appears this bill may not pass the Senate.

### Juvenile Justice Legislation

FJJA will be providing an update of legislation in the coming weeks.

### Foundation Scholarship Opportunity for Juvenile Justice Involved Youth

The Florida Juvenile Justice Youth Investment Award is now in its 2<sup>nd</sup> year of awards, made possible by a grant from the Eckerd Family Foundation. The award is designed to assist youth who are or were served by the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice or contracted providers. Applications may be submitted at any time during the year, and are subject to funding availability. The average award is \$500.

The funding may be requested to assist youth leaving the juvenile justice system, with the next step essential to academic achievement or workforce readiness which cannot be met through any other available resources essential to the youth's success. Awards may contribute to tuition for post-secondary education, supplies, transportation, education or employability assistance with funding made directly to the vendor.

To learn more about the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation scholarship program, including the application visit [FJJF Scholarships](#)

### Florida Adopts Forecasting Technology to Target High Risk Youths

*Excerpt from Governing.com, April 14, 2010*

In Florida, more than 85,000 kids flood the state's juvenile justice system every year. But this year, officials hope to shrink that number using new technology that examines key historical data to forecast the future. Announced Wednesday, April 14, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice has implemented new predictive analytics software to analyze predictors such as past offense history, demographics, gang affiliation, peer association and home life environment to find out which kids have a higher chance of recidivism. The idea, then, is to target high-risk cases with programs that address specific needs for rehabilitation so they don't stumble back into the system.

"My job is to put myself out of business," said Mark Greenwald, chief of research and planning at the department. In years past, to predict delinquency numbers the department used Excel, which had limited functionality that allowed the department to look "in the rear-view mirror," Greenwald said, but wasn't advanced enough to help state officials see clearly ahead.

For more information, go to [Forecasting Technology](#)

### David Barnes Named Youth Ambassador of Juvenile Justice Youth Success Day

David Barnes was selected as one of two Youth Ambassadors of Juvenile Justice Youth Success Day held Wednesday, April 14 during Children's Week in Tallahassee. He was the first youth from a residential commitment program to receive this honor and recognition.

At 17, David was sent to Avon Park Youth Academy. While there he received his GED and selected landscaping as his vocational trade offered through Home Builders Institute.

He received his Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate of Training in Landscaping and employment classes to prepare him for the expectations of the workforce.

During the ceremony, he was awarded \$200 by the Florida Juvenile Justice Foundation, as well as matching funds from both G4S Youth Services, LLC and

the Home Builders Institute's Herman and Patsy Smith Award. Upon receiving the awards he commented that the money will help pay his application fee to Universal Technical Institute and help obtain a drivers permit.

He attributes his success to "the positive staff at Avon Park, HBI and Youth for Christ who were willing to listen and help me believe in myself. They taught me how to communicate and have hope in my future."



*Traveling with David to Tallahassee was part of the team of people who supported him during his time at Avon Park Youth Academy. Pictured (from left) are: Christina Kuhn, Becky Anderson, both of the Home Builders Institute, Alice McDonald of G4S Youth Services, David, Tony Whidden of G4S and Youth for Christ, Donna Whidden of Youth for Christ, Tadar Muhammad of Home Builders Institute, and Cathy Craig-Myers of the Florida Juvenile Justice Association.*

## Recently Released Report

### Report Calls for Use of Positive Youth Development Approaches In Juvenile Justice

The Coalition for Juvenile Justice (CJJ) has issued a report calling for the use of positive youth development approaches in juvenile justice.

Authors Jeff Butts of John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Gordon Bazemore of Florida Atlantic University argue that treating young offenders purely as villains, who are in need of punishment, is pointless from the perspective of improving their chances to be productive citizens. Treating them purely as victims in need of treatment does not entirely prepare them to be productive adults either.

Positive youth development approaches, say Butts and Bazemore, have the best chance to accomplish what most juveniles need: building on their strengths and connecting them to the community they live in. Say the authors: "Youth who commit violent acts, for example, will always prompt a strong response from law enforcement and corrections. Yet, punishment and deterrence are not effective strategies for helping youth to succeed at school and work."

To read the report go to, [Positive Youth Justice](#)

### U.S. Department of Justice Reports

#### **Causes, Correlates of Girls' Delinquency**

Risk and protective factors for girls' delinquency are, in many ways, similar to risk and protective factors for boys' delinquency. However, key gender differences exist, with important implications for program and policy development. Important areas for consideration in programming and policy include delinquency prevention and intervention programs for girls must address physical maltreatment, including sexual abuse and assault; responses to mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder should be integral components of programming for girls; lack of family supervision and monitoring has a causal link to delinquency for both boys and girls; positive school involvement protects against delinquency in both girls and boys; and the link between girls' delinquent behavior and system responses remains an important area for policy, programs, and research.

To read full report go to: [Girls and Study Group](#).

#### **Youth's Needs & Services: Findings from Survey of Youth in Residential Care**

In recent years, the juvenile justice and mental health fields have increasingly recognized the scope of the mental health needs of youth involved in the juvenile justice system and the inadequacy of services to meet these needs. Problems with anger are especially prevalent within this population, with more than 60% of youth reporting that they were easily upset, quick to lose their temper, and often angry.

This is consistent with the fact that 43% of youth are currently in placement for a violent offense (i.e., murder, rape, kidnapping, robbery, or assault). Symptoms of depression and anxiety are also common, with 51% of the custody population reporting that nervous or worried feelings have kept them from doing what they want to do over the past few months, and 52% indicating that they feel lonely "too much of the time." Mental health services in the form of evaluation, ongoing therapy, or counseling are nearly universally available in the facilities, with 97% of youth living in places that provide one or more of these services either inside or outside the facility.

However, despite the relatively high suicide risk in the placement population, individual screening for suicide risk is not common. More than one-fourth (26%) of youth are in facilities that do not screen all youth for suicide risk. Despite the importance of early identification, 45% of youth are in facilities that fail to screen all youth within 24 hours and 26% are in facilities that do not screen any youth at intake (first 24 hours).

Screening for general mental health needs is also limited. Less than half (47%) of youth are in facilities that provide mental health evaluations or appraisals for all residents. Youth are equally likely to receive counseling in their current facility regardless of their answers about their recent mental and emotional problems or previous traumatic experiences. Slightly more than half (53%) of youth in custody say they have personally met with a counselor at their current facility to help them contend with their feelings or emotional problems.

To read full report, go to [Youth's Needs & Services](#).

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#### **In the News**

- Christian Science Monitor - Click here to read: [Teen Juries Put a New Spin on Juvenile Justice](#)
- New York Times - Click here to read: [The Myth of Mean Girls](#)
- Los Angeles Times - Click here to read: [Getting the State Out of Juvenile Justice](#)
- Youth Today - Click here to read: [Justice Department Backs OJJDP Reauthorization](#)

#### **Research and Policy Updates**

Additional resources for juvenile justice research and policy updates are available at:

- Act 4 Juvenile Justice - <http://www.act4jj.org/>
- Campaign for Youth Justice - <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/>
- Center for Children's Law and Policy - <http://www.cclp.org/>
- Coalition for Juvenile Justice - <http://www.juvjustice.org/>
- Fight Crime: Invest in Kids - <http://www.fightcrime.org/>
- National Juvenile Defender Center - <http://www.njdc.info/>
- National Juvenile Justice Network - <http://www.njjn.org/>

## Calendar of Events

### 2010 Multicultural Conference

May 20 - 21, 2010

Hyatt Regency Jacksonville-Riverfront, Jacksonville, FL

Sponsored by the Florida Department of Children and Families, this year's conference theme, *Moving Forward: explore and change the lens with which you view the world*, speaks to Florida's commitment to advance the use of evidence-based approaches for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse in culturally diverse populations. Please visit the [2010 Multicultural Conference website](#).

### Gender Responsive "Girl Matters" Training of Trainers Workshop

June 7-11, 2010, Friday Musicale Community Building

631 Oak Street, Jacksonville, FL.

For information, go to [Girl Matters Training of the Trainers](#).

### FJJA Retreat

June 14-16, 2010

Casa Marina Resort, Key West, Florida

Hotel reservation deadline is Friday, May 14th. The special FJJA rate is available three days prior to and three days after the Retreat meeting dates. To make your reservation, go to [FJJA Retreat](#).



#### 2009-2010 Meeting Calendar

##### Board of Directors Meetings

- Monday-Wednesday, June 14-16, 2010, Board Retreat, Casa Marina Resort, Key West, FL

##### Executive Committee Meetings

- Monthly Conference Call  
1st Monday of every month, 2 pm
- Legislative Session  
Conference Call Every Monday, 2 pm

## Member News

### Family Day Celebrated at Orange County Youth Academy

Orange County Youth Academy celebrated the first Family Day on March 13. The St. Patrick's Day theme included games, giveaways, music, food and fun.



At Orange Youth Academy, family gatherings are an important event. Family involvement is a key component of a youth's time at Orange Youth Academy and the program makes every effort to ensure that family is engaged throughout the entire treatment process.

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### Hastings Youth Academy Supports American Cancer Society

The staff at Hastings Youth Academy organized team Wildcats to participate in the American Cancer Society's "Relay for Life" on April 10, 2010 at the Pedro Menendez High School in Hastings, FL.

The fundraising goal was \$1,500 dollars. Many different fundraisers were held to reach the goal, including BBQ dinner sales, a car wash, dollar jean day, penny drive, bake sales, a Krispy Kreme fundraiser, and many more.

The Wildcats showed their team spirit by supporting cancer survivors, as well as supporting those who are currently fighting the disease.



## Member News

### Lake Academy Celebrates St. Patrick's Day

Youth and staff at Lake Academy participated in the annual St. Patrick's Day "Spring Fling" on March 17. The day was coordinated by Assistant Facility Administrator April Hannah and included a staff karaoke performance of "Stop In the Name of Love" dedicated to the young ladies at Lake Academy. The theme for the day was teamwork and green work. Teamwork activities included sponge races and a cabbage toss. The youth also participated in a lime green Jell-O eating contest and feasted on green tinted goodies.



*April Hanna sports a green wig as part of the activities.*

### Spring Field Day held at Gulf Academy

On March 24, 2010 Gulf Academy held its first annual Spring Field Day. The event was coordinated by recreational therapist Andrew Timmons. The purpose for the event was recognizing youth for making good choices. Timmons, staff and youth worked together to decide on the criteria for earning participation in the special event. Activities included games, food and fun for everyone.



## Please Plan to Attend the FJJA Annual Retreat at Casa Marina Resort in Key West

FJJA will be holding the annual retreat this year at the Casa Marina Resort in Key West on June 14-16. *The 2010 registration fee is \$129.*

For those who are long time FJJA members, the Casa Marina Resort was the site of our 2005 retreat. The hotel is now part of the Waldorf Astoria chain and has been remodeled.

To make your hotel reservations, go to [FJJA Hotel Reservations](#).

A special block of rooms has been made available to FJJA members at \$159 per night beginning June 10 through June 20 if you are interested in arriving a few days before and staying a few days after.

We encourage you to bring your family! Our plans include work sessions each morning beginning at 9 a.m. and ending at 2 p.m. so you have time for relaxation and family.

We look forward to seeing each of you at the Casa Marina in June.



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**BOOK BY MAY 14  
TO RESERVE YOUR ROOM**

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