

February 2011

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**Inside this Issue:**

Reports of Interest	2
Key Messages	2
In the News	2
Scott Releases Budget	3
Medicaid Update	3
Legislative Agenda	3
FJJA Executive Officer	
Elections	3
Conference, Webinars	4
Events, Calendar	4
Save the Date	5
Member News	6-7

## 2011 Adolescent Conference A Success

This year's Adolescent Conference was a resounding success, with over 350 professionals attending the event. This year's theme, "Embracing Change" underscored the opportunities to improve Florida's system of care for youth.

Wansley Walters, the new Secretary for the Department of Juvenile Justice opened the conference as keynote speaker. Secretary Walters highlighted the successes in Miami Dade, including innovative services designed to divert youth from arrest. Secretary Walters shared that Governor Scott has asked her to develop the "best juvenile justice system in the nation."

Walters asked conference participants to "work with the agency and stand with us." Laying out her vision, Secretary Walters shared four elements of that vision, "a system that doesn't wait for an arrest to help a child; a system that doesn't widen the net, but strengthens the safety net; a system that we could face our own children passing through; and a system that protects public safety while also providing loving care to protect children's spirits."

Judge Irene Sullivan, author of "Raised by the Courts" shared her experience of working with thousands of children as a circuit court judge. Sharing personal perspective as well as her overall view of the system at large, Judge Sullivan shared an optimistic message that we are on the right path.

The workshops were well received and many presentations were made by members of the Florida Juvenile Justice Association who are experts in their respective fields. The conference was followed by a full day intensive post conference workshop on Bullying and Suicide Prevention.

The conference also showcased amazing youth who are successfully meeting the challenges of getting their lives back on track. The Color Guard from Orange Youth Academy participated in the posting of colors. Young women from the Frances Walker Halfway House performed an interpretative dance they had conceived and written, and another youth sang a song she had composed.



*Secretary Wansley Walters and Judge Irene Sullivan*



*From left Cathy Craig Myers, Executive Director of FJJA; Wansley Walters, Secretary, Florida Department of Juvenile Justice; Mark Fontaine, Executive Director of FADAA.*

## Mark Your Calendars

**2011 Legislative Session**  
 Convenes Tuesday, March 8  
 Ends Friday, May 6

**FJJA Board Meeting**  
 April 7, 2011, 9 am to 4 pm  
 DISC Village  
 3333 W. Pensacola St.,  
 Tallahassee, FL

**Annual FJJA Board Retreat**  
 June 12-15, 2011  
 LaPlaya Golf and Beach Resort,  
 Naples, FL

**The FJJA Newsletter is published monthly**

Cathy Craig-Myers, Editor  
 Lynn Redmond, Publisher

Deadline is the 4th of each month  
 Send your news to [lynn@fjja.org](mailto:lynn@fjja.org)

### Reports of Interest

## Obama Proposes \$120 Million Juvenile Justice System Incentive Grants

President Obama's proposed budget calls for \$50 million in cuts to Juvenile Justice, refocusing formula and other grants into a Juvenile Justice System Incentive Grant that will reward states for tangible improvements in juvenile justice systems. They include: engagement in community-based juvenile strategic planning, implementation of evidence-based strategies and practices, employment of diversion strategies, and reduction of disproportionate minority contact. To read article in Youth today, click here.: [http://www.youthtoday.org/view\\_article.cfm?article\\_id=4629](http://www.youthtoday.org/view_article.cfm?article_id=4629)

## Smart on Crime: Recommendations for the Administration and Congress

The Sentencing Project and more than 40 of the nation's leading criminal justice reform organizations collaborated to produce a comprehensive report examining the nation's criminal justice system and offering recommendations. Recommendations include those specific to juvenile justice. To read more: <http://www.besmartoncrime.org/>

### In the News

**Youth Today:** *Stand-alone Juvenile Justice Agencies Dwindling in Number*  
[http://www.youthtoday.org/view\\_article.cfm?article\\_id=4584](http://www.youthtoday.org/view_article.cfm?article_id=4584)

**Youth Today:** *Interview with Judge Irene Sullivan, author of Raised by the Courts*  
[http://www.youthtoday.org/view\\_article.cfm?article\\_id=4602](http://www.youthtoday.org/view_article.cfm?article_id=4602)

NOTE: Judge Sullivan is a plenary speaker at next week's Adolescent Conference in Orlando

**New York Times:** *Whither Young Offenders? The Debate Has Begun*  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/us/23bcjuvenile.html?\\_r=1&scp=5&sq=juvenile%20justice&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/23/us/23bcjuvenile.html?_r=1&scp=5&sq=juvenile%20justice&st=cse)

**Orlando Sentinel:** *Orange County closes jail section, may house juveniles*  
[http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-02-03/news/os-orange-jail-changes-20110131\\_1\\_orange-county-jail-jail-population-inmates](http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-02-03/news/os-orange-jail-changes-20110131_1_orange-county-jail-jail-population-inmates)

**Winston Salem Journal:** *State should raise age for charging juveniles as adults, study says*  
<http://www2.journalnow.com/news/2011/jan/15/wsmet01-state-should-change-raise-of-juveniles-tre-ar-696539/>

## FJJA 2010-2011 Key Messages

**Florida's juvenile justice system is one of the most comprehensive in the country and is always improving.**

- We have nationally recognized programs and services throughout the state which serve the needs of each local community.
- Florida is a leader in prevention, early intervention and diversion services helping to reduce the number of youth from penetrating the system.

**A responsive and balanced juvenile justice continuum is good for Florida and good for the youth who need services.**

- Public safety is the most important goal, and a variety of services delivered locally ensure that the right service for the right youth at the right time occurs.
- Wise investments in the juvenile justice system pay off now and in the future and stop the flow of youth into the adult prison system.

**Building on our successes saves dollars that won't be spent on prisons and will prevent future victims.**

- Indicators point to the fact that today's adult prisoners are less likely to be in prison had they benefited from effective juvenile justice interventions at an early age.
- We can't afford to lose ground in these difficult economic times; we must build on what is working successfully.
- We must invest now or will pay more later.

### Governor Scott Releases Budget

Governor Scott's budget proposal gives tax breaks, reduces state jobs, revamps the state pension system, closes two state prisons, privatizes three state mental health hospitals, downsizes state agencies, and eliminates of the Department of Community Affairs.

The proposal was presented in a two-year format and focuses on core functions and sets performance measures for all budget items. The budget includes cuts to the following:

- Department of Children and Families 1800 FTES - \$178 million
- Agency for Persons with Disabilities 155 FTES - \$173 million (17%)
- Department of Juvenile Justice 813 FTES - \$108 million (18%)

### Senate Introduces Medicaid Reform Proposal

A bill has been introduced that would move millions of low-income Floridians receiving Medicaid to HMO-style health plans, effectively putting limits on how much the state would spend on the health care program. The bill includes dividing the state into 19 regions, and moving Medicaid recipients into HMOs or other managed care plans beginning in December 2011. Sen. Joe Negron, R-Stuart, the chair of the Senate Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, believes the plan will save the state \$4.3 billion over three years.

The Agency for Health Care Administration is preparing the necessary waiver to be submitted to the federal government. Gov. Scott recently met with U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Sebelius to discuss the waiver.

### Nominations Will Be Accepted for the FJJA Executive Officers In April 2011

FJJA will be seeking nominations for six executive officer (6) positions to include Treasurer, Incoming President and four at large executive committee positions. Those elected will serve for a period of two (2) years. Executive Committee members may serve for more than one consecutive term and President and President Elect positions may be elected to non-consecutive terms.

The Nominating Committee will be formed at April Board meeting. On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the Past-President will convene the nominating committee. Four additional members will be selected for the nominating committee by a majority vote of the Executive Committee, with such members being selected from the agency membership.

On May 12, 2011 the Nominating Committee shall submit a slate of officers to the members of the Association. At the FJJA annual retreat in June, elections will be held with additional nominations accepted from the floor. Those not attending the retreat may vote via e-mail, telephone and proxy according to the FJJA By-Laws. There is one vote per Agency Membership. Associate Agency Members and Ex Officio Members do not have voting privileges.

### FJJA 2010-2011 Legislative Agenda

**Maximize Florida's investment in a balanced juvenile justice system to ensure public safety.**

- Reduces crime.
- Reduces victimization and related costs.
- Reduces need for future prison construction.
- Reduces flow of juveniles into adult prison system.

#### FJJA Long Term Legislative Priorities

- Balance the Juvenile Justice Continuum
- Enhance Gender Specific Programming
- Reduce Disproportionate Minority Contact
- Ensure Legal Representation
- Develop Alternatives to Secure Detention

### Please Continue to Meet with Your Legislators

[\*Click for talking points\*](#)

- Support the Continuum of Care
- FJJA 2010-2011 Legislative Agenda
- Reduce or Eliminate State Operated Residential programs
- Create a more efficient QA process
- Preserve BHOS Services for JJ youth
- Rethink FL Definition of Recidivism
- Improve collaboration with workforce development
- Implementing Evidence Based Practices

## Upcoming Conferences

24th Annual Children's Mental Health Research and Policy Conference, Sunday - Wednesday, March 20 - 23, Hyatt Regency Tampa, Florida . For information go to [Tampa Conference](#).

Innovations in Treatment, Gateway Community Services 2nd Annual Spring Conference, April 6-8, 2011, Jacksonville. Participants will explore the future of treatment and attitude in today's changing world. For more information, go to [Spring Conference](#).

## Upcoming Events

Florida Children's Week

[For details of of the 2011 Children's Week Events, click here.](#)

Department of Juvenile Justice: Youth Success Day

April 5 & 6, 2011, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. State Capitol

## Upcoming Webinars

ARISE Webinars

3/16-Anger Management 2: What Can You Control?

4/20-Anger Management 3: Powerful Anger Solutions

For more information, contact ARISE at 888-680-6100



## FJJA 2010-2011 Meeting Calendar

### Board of Directors Meetings

- April 7, 2011, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., DISC Village, 3333 W. Pensacola St., Tallahassee, FL
- June 12-15, 2011  
Annual FJJA Board Retreat, LaPlaya Golf & Beach Resort, Naples, FL

### Executive Committee Meetings

- Monthly Conference Call - 1st Monday of every month, 2 p.m.
- Legislative Session - Conference Call Every Monday, 2 p.m.

## What if it Were Your Child?

By Mark Hassikis and Lisa Jacobs, *posted on Illinois Bar Journal Online*

What would the juvenile justice system look like if we knew our sons, daughters, and grandchildren would go through it? Remember the really stupid things you did as a teenager? Many of us would have to admit to reckless if not sometimes dangerous or even very serious mistakes we made as young people. Many of us privately take solace that our worst misdeeds weren't exposed. Or, if our "bad" act was discovered, we can remember being held accountable by our families, by our school, or by others in our community.

And somehow, we were given a second chance to grow up and do better. But we may also recall then breathing a huge sigh of relief. Without that second chance, we might not be the lawyers and judges we are today. So what if *your child* did the things you or your friends did as teenagers? What if he or she got caught? What if your child or grandchild had mental health problems, or became involved in drug, and/or alcohol use or abuse, or got into a fight on school property?

What would you do if your child or grandchild were arrested and charged with a delinquent or criminal offense? Or - if your child got into trouble - would you want something different? What would that be? *What would the juvenile justice system look like if we designed it with our own children in mind?*

Youth make mistakes, sometimes serious ones. Youth need opportunities to learn, to go to school, to get treatment if necessary, to make amends for causing harm and to have a second chance at life.

We can do better. So we pose again this question: What would you want the juvenile justice system to look like *if you knew your child was going to go through it?*

To read entire article, go to <http://www.isba.org/ibj/2011/01/presidentpage>



**SAVE THE DATE**

**June 12 - 15, 2011**

**FJJA's 2011 Retreat**

**LaPlaya Beach & Golf Resort**



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A photograph of a night view of a pool area. The pool is illuminated with yellow lights. There are palm trees and a building in the background.

### Member News

#### **Columbus Juvenile Residential Facility**

On January 9, 2011 Columbus hosted a tour and lunch for Blake Beach and Drew Lavine from G4S Youth Services, LLC.

Three youth from the program conducted a tour of the facilities including showing the guest the living environment. Afterwards, youth from the Stage Works program provided entertainment. Stage Works is a program that teaches the youth anger management skills, drumming and acting. The luncheon was hosted, prepared and served by youth involved in the culinary arts program.

#### **Hillsborough Intensive Residential Treatment**

Hillsborough Intensive Residential Treatment (IRT) program dog training program, Dude for Dogs, which brings dogs into programs for committed to train. A typical dog training program involves at least one animal welfare organization and a facility. Occasionally, multiple dog rescue programs and training organizations cooperate to ensure the success of the program. Last April, Hillsborough IRT was awarded the Best Practice Award from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and G4S Youth Services, LLC.

Hillsborough Community College students in the Vet Tech program are on site weekly to work with the youth and the animals and the College also provides free vet care as well as well as emergency care.

To participate in the program the youth have to be in good standing and making positive progress in the program.

Hillsborough IRT worked with six dogs in 2009 and nine dogs in 2010, successfully graduating a total of 12 dogs for adoption. In 2010, three of the dogs were trained for owners and returned to their homes upon graduation.

Pinellas County SPCA volunteers come on site and work with the youth teaching them how to handle the dogs properly, train leash control, basic commands and agility course training. After the eight week training period, the volunteers test and certify the dogs.

Dogs can earn up to three certifications: adoptable means the dogs follow basic commands; canine good citizenship means they can follow basic commands and complete the agility course and a service dog certification means they are well mannered, follow all commands, complete agility course training and service dog training. Hillsborough IRT has had all 12 dogs earn Canine Good Citizen certification.

#### **Okeechobee Girls Academy**

Okeechobee Girls Academy (OGA) is committed to developing a continuing relationship with the County of Okeechobee Community by choosing to volunteer with the Special Olympic Equestrians of Okeechobee twice a month. The girls will help to prepare the horses for competition the will be ridden by some very special youth of the surrounding areas.

Each young lady chosen to participate in the program will write an essay on her experiences during the day. The purpose of the program is to help the young ladies understand the importance of community service along with improving life social skills that will help them as they prepare to return to their individual communities.

#### **Riverside Academy**

On Monday, February 28, 2011, Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo has partnered with Riverside Academy and Hillsborough County School to present the "Zoo to You Program, Feathers Scales and Fur" for all 165 youth at the residential facility..

For the one time presentation, a wide variety of wildlife, including numerous birds, reptiles and small mammals, will be brought to the facility for educational and interactive opportunities.

### **Member News**

#### **Okeechobee Intensive Halfway House**

On February 12, 2011 Okeechobee Intensive Halfway House (OIHH) youth attended the Friends "Fur"ever Adopt-a-thon at Jensen Beach. Five youth participated in the Urban Tails program with four dogs available for adoption. This event is designed to allow the adoption of rescued animals. It was also an opportunity for the youth to be exposed to the community and network with individuals from other community service animal focused organizations.

#### **Orlando Intensive Youth Academy**

On February 14, 2011, young men from the Orlando Intensive Youth Academy (OIYA) were chosen to represent G4S Youth Services, LLC as the color guard at the 2011 Adolescent Conference at Disney's Contemporary Resort. The young men presented the colors before an audience of over 300 people during the opening ceremony and one was chosen to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Their service was outstanding.

#### **Okeechobee Juvenile Offender Correction Center**

The past few months have been filled with activities for the youth at Okeechobee Juvenile Offender Correction Center (OJOCC). On December 23, 2010, Santa visited each unit with a gift of candy and hot chocolate to celebrate the holiday. The units were decorated and a contest for the most festive unit was held with all of the units joining in the activity.

Additionally, Tantie Juvenile Residential Facility hosted a "Dress for Success" day with the youth as part of an educational experience. Dress shirts and ties of all sizes were brought to the facility for the youth to wear while they presented their various business ideas for the future. The youth got to experience a variety of interviewing and presenting skills. This was also a good opportunity for the youth to see themselves in a professional light and to understand how others view them.

#### **Okeechobee Youth Development Center**

On Saturday, February 26th, Okeechobee Youth Development Center (OYDC) and Home Builders Institute (HBI) Project CRAFT will host the first Family Day. The day will be filled with events and activities that will promote the skills and abilities acquired by the youth on the HBI Cottage.

Highlighting the day will be landscaping and facilities maintenance trades with instructors on hand to answer questions on transition back to the youth's home communities, job placement, GED/High School Diploma status, as well as trade certification.

Both OYDC and HBI are extremely excited about this upcoming event and believe it will aid the youth who have participated in Project CRAFT's successful return to their home community.

#### **Pasco Girls Academy**

On Friday, November 12th, Secretary Frank Peterman Jr. was the guest speaker for the Pasco Girls Academy (PGA) ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Sewing and Enrichment Center provided by JFJ Ministries, Inc.. The center has sewing machines, a boutique and media center. The girls will be provided 18 hours of sewing instruction, will be able to purchase items in the boutique with checking life skills, and the media center that provides a library and other resources.

In attendance at the open house was Ramona Salazar-Larrabee, DJJ Program Monitor, Tim Niemann, Central Lead Chief Probation Officer, Brian Neupaver Vice President of Operations and Steve Riley, Regional Director, both of G4S Youth Services, LLC.