Djj Holds Employee Recognition Ceremony at Tweed Courthouse

Hundreds attend as staff is recognized for outstanding performance; awards given for professional excellence

On Thursday, November 18th, the NYC Department of Juvenile Justice held its first Employee Recognition Ceremony, commemorating the outstanding commitment and achievements of 18 exceptional agency staff members.

The event was held in the Blue Room at the historic Tweed Courthouse, which serves as headquarters for the City’s Department of Education.

More than 200 people gathered to recognize the outstanding accomplishments and extraordinary dedication of employees who distinguished themselves in 2004 through exceptional service to the City of New York.

Each recipient was presented with a custom-engraved crystal award listing his or her name, title and award category. Awards were distributed by a number of notable presenters that included DEA Supervisory Special Agent Mauricio Fernandez, Teamsters Citywide Director Gregory Floyd, Zac Smith - Deputy Chief of Staff to Deputy Mayor Walcott, and Fred Gebauer, Counsel to Criminal Justice Coordinator John Feinblatt.

NYC Council Member and Chair of the Subcommittee on Juvenile Justice Sara M. Gonzalez congratulated the award recipients and provided special remarks during the ceremony.

Mayor’s Message

By Michael R. Bloomberg

Three years ago, I was inaugurated as the 108th Mayor of this great city. It was only months after the attack on the World Trade Center and New Yorkers throughout the City were asking ourselves: Can we recover? Will we be safe? Would we ever be the same?

Three years later, we have answered these questions. We are safer today than we have been in modern memory. We have taken our City from financial crisis to financial stability. We are creating new jobs and we are making our school system the best in the nation.

The state of the City is strong – and we are going to make it even stronger for the future. We will do that by build-

Agency Hosts Columbia U. Peacebuilders from Ireland

In October, DJJ participated in the Northern Ireland Peacebuilders Program, an international training and research project sponsored by Columbia University.

The program was designed to promote professional relationships and exchange between U.S. governmental and public service entities and their counterparts in Northern Ireland.

The ultimate goal is to provide understanding and useful insight into...
Peacebuilders –

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effective strategies and operations
that may be used in Ireland to build
peace in what has been a troubled
land.

Police officials and community
leaders from Northern Ireland were
selected through a highly competi-
tive process to engage in four
weeks of study and work in the
United States. Participants were
grouped into two-person teams,
spending weeks one and four
attending classes at Columbia
University and weeks two and
three in assignments with govern-
mental and other organizations in
New York City.

Peter Connolly, Crime Prevention
Officer with the Police Service of
Northern Ireland, and Roisin
Muldoon, Operations Manager with
the Probation Board for Northern
Ireland, were assigned to DJJ.

During their tenure with the
agency, the team met with the
Commissioner and management
staff, observed operations and
court proceedings, and shadowed
medical and mental health and
case management staff in DJJ’s
secure and non-secure facilities.

In addition to DJJ, organizations
hosting the Peacebuilders included
NYPD and the Department of
Parks & Recreation.

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-ing on our successes and building
a “City of opportunity.” Together,
we will foster opportunity by
making the safest American city
even safer.

Our public safety agencies have
played an important role in the
achievements our City has
experienced over the past three
years. Through programs such as
Operation Impact, anti-gun
initiatives, Operation Spotlight and
others, crime is down 14%, to the
lowest levels since the 1960s.
Gang activity has been reduced,
there is less graffiti, and quality of
life has been enhanced in all five
boroughs.

I am proud of our public safety
achievements and this includes the
important work of all the dedicated
staff at the Department of Juvenile
Justice.

Some look to the future with doubt
and uncertainty. New Yorkers look
to the future with spirit and
confidence and see a City of
opportunity.

I want to thank you for your hard
work and express my appreciation
for your efforts in maintaining and
enhancing public safety in New
York.

New Faces at DJJ

Department of Juvenile
Justice adds 41 new
staff members

In November, NYC Department of
Correction veteran Thomas
Tsotsoros joined DJJ as Deputy
Commissioner for Operations and
Detention. In addition, Walter R.
Ellis was hired as the agency’s
Deputy Director of Human
Resources and Stanley N. Helfeld
as Director of Training.

To further support agency
operations, 41 new staff members
were added across the board,
including 31 Juvenile Counselors,
4 Special Officers, 2 Case
Managers, 3 Institutional Aides,
and one Homemaker in SEEDS.

In addition to new employees,
several staff members were
recently promoted. Among them
are Cynthia Mickens and Gustavo
Diaz, both from Horizon, and
Joseph Forrester from Crossroads.
All three were promoted to the
rank of Senior Special Officer.
Joyce Dao Receives NYC Excellence in Technology Award

On Thursday, October 21st, the Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications (DOITT) hosted its annual NYC Excellence in Technology Awards. DJJ’s Joyce Dao was honored at the ceremony with an Excellence in IT Service and Support Award.

Ms. Dao has been instrumental in activating the Department’s website and making certain that its features and content remain functional and up to date. In addition, she provides technical support for the agency’s network administration as well as for DJJ’s Central Office and Court Services.

The annual citywide Excellence in Technology Awards Program was established to salute the City’s IT professionals and managers for their dedication and continuing service to the people of New York. Agency heads throughout the City were invited to submit nominations. A screening panel reviewed each submission and selected a winner in each category.

The number of nominations received for 2004 vastly exceeded those submitted in prior years, resulting, as always, in a highly qualified pool of candidates for the coveted awards.

Landslide Victory in DJJ Election Day Youth Programs

On Tuesday, November 2nd, 93 juveniles at Bridges and nearly 100 residents from SEEDS participated in separate Youth Election Day programs, designed to familiarize them with the voting process and permit them to cast their ballot in a mock election for President and Vice President of the United States, and Senator from the State of New York.

Juveniles were selected to portray Republican and Democratic Party candidates for each of the three offices. Each “candidate” studied the actual candidate’s positions on key issues before participating in a presentation for their peers and DJJ staff members.

The all-day program included voter registration and role playing performances focused on the history of Continued on page 4
Residents Explore College and Career Possibilities at Passages Academy

Through a strategic partnership with the New York City College of Technology, Passages Academy is making career education and exploration available to juvenile residents.

The innovative program has provided for several departments from the college to visit select Passages sites to gauge response to and interest in the program. Professors from the college have made presentations to residents, covering fields such as hospitality, travel and tourism, dental hygiene, advertising design, and graphic arts.

Initial presentations were well received and plans are underway to expand the program into subsequent semesters.

Passages Academy is a New York City public school that provides credit-bearing classes, educational services and quality programs to young people who are in the care and custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

Offering courses for grades 5 through 12, Passages classes follow New York City curriculum and New York State Standards. More than 4,000 school age students are enrolled through Passages Academy each year.

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ballot casting and voting rights in the U.S. Skits were followed by a briefing on the duties and responsibilities of the President, Vice President, and U.S. Senators, as well as a simulated debate between student candidates.

Votes cast by the juveniles produced interesting results. SEEDS voters selected John Kerry and Charles Schumer by wide margins. Juvenile voters at Bridges also chose John Kerry over George W. Bush by a margin of 77 votes.

The Election Day Program was planned and implemented by Migdalia Cortes at SEEDS and Dennis Anyata at Bridges.

Award ceremony – Continued from page 1

DJJ employees, colleagues, family members and friends, as well as individuals from other agencies, turned out to support the award recipients. Each of the honorees took the time to make brief remarks upon accepting their award.

The award presentation ceremony was followed by a reception in the building’s ornate rotunda area. DJJ is the first agency to hold such a ceremony in the historic venue.

For more information about DJJ or to access back issues of the Juvenile Justice report, visit us online at: nyc.gov/html/djj