The Courterly

YVRP Works to Prevent Youth Violence

First in a series of articles about Community-Based Probation and the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership with FJD Adult and Juvenile Probation Departments. The first installation concentrates on Juvenile Probation.

When I met with the team of probation officers from the Community Based Probation Services Office in West Philadelphia (“Community-Based West” or CBW), I was introduced to a group of bright, knowledgeable, young people who are confident of what they’re doing, and what they know about their charges in the program. As one of their supervisors later confided, “Being on the street is a young person’s game.”

Steve Christian, who gave me a ride to the meeting, and looks to be in his 40’s, is known as the “Godfather of YVRP.” He is sometimes called the “Grandfather of YVRP,” but they say only because he’s been with the program since its inception.

With offices at 46th and Market, the group included Probation Officers (POs) assigned to geographic units, Glen Mills Schools, School-Based Probation, Electronic Monitoring, Community Services/Community Liaison, and the Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP).

On the day that I visited, CBW Lead Supervisor Miriam Monte, CCP Civil Section Employee of the Year displays her award at the annual holiday party.

(Continued on page 2)
President Judge C. Darnell Jones II Sworn In

On Friday, January 20, 2006, President Judge C. Darnell Jones II was formally sworn in as President Judge of the FJD Court of Common Pleas.

Held in the Ceremonial Courtroom 653, the investiture included scores of judges who processed into the room accompanied by classical music provided by Prothonotary Joseph Evers. Following an inspired invocation by the Pastor John Croft of the Fellowship Christian Church, remarks from the Bench were provided by Supreme Court Justice Sandra Schultz Newman, and President Judges Emeritus Alex Bonavitacola and Edward J. Bradley. The Bar was represented by Vice Chancellor A. Michael Pratt, Esquire. The oath of office was administered by President Judge Emeritus Frederica A. Massiah-Jackson who was the last to occupy the President Judge’s office.

In his closing remarks that included references to family, President Judge Jones encouraged all the members of the court, the administrators and staff to work together to achieve success.

This was a moving ceremony, befitting the office, and the message.

(Continued from page 1)

C. Darnell Jones II took over the reins of the District as he assumed the responsibilities of the Office of the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas.
In a moving formal ceremony on February 1st, Arbitration Center Manager Joseph L. Hassett, Esquire received the prestigious and rarely-awarded Certificate of Merit from the American Reed Cross, signed by the President of the United States. Proclaimed a hero before his friends, family, co-workers and other court leaders, Joe was the only person from this area to earn the Certificate in the last ten years. From all across the country, only 69 others were awarded the Certificate of Merit in 2005.

Joe saved the life of Arthur Saunders, an Arbitration Center litigant, when, during a hearing, Mr. Saunders collapsed suffering from a heart attack. Using one of the portable external defibrillators located throughout court-occupied buildings, Joe had to apply shocks three times to restore Mr. Saunders’ breathing, pulse, and consciousness during the crucial minutes before emergency personnel arrived on the scene.

Remarks from Administrative Judge James J. Fitzgerald, lawyer P. Douglas Sisk, Esquire, and Red Cross CEO Tom Foley painted a clear picture of Joe Hassett’s courage. His calm and effective actions under dire circumstances were said to be a perfect example of Ernest Hemingway’s definition of courage: “Grace under fire.”

We’re proud of Joe, and the other 69 employee volunteers who sacrifice their time and effort to undergo training for annual certification in the use of the defibrillators. They stand ready to help us and our customers should the need arise. We should also be proud of Shanda Holloway, from the FJD Human Resources Department who administers the program to organize volunteers, schedule training, maintain the equipment – and in this case, help to save someone’s life – as just a part of her many responsibilities. Without the support of the FJD Administrative Governing Board and Joe Hassett’s heroism, an emergency – and a man’s life – may have turned out very differently.

**Defibrillator Program Volunteers**

Marlene Dorsey  
Shanda Holloway  
Carolyn Dombrowski  
Kathryn Gallagher  
Anthony Romano  
Keith Smith  
Carole Scurry  
Joseph Hassett  
Raphael Vargas  
Denise Lancaster  
James White  
Frank Spatocco  
Karleen Flowers  
Mario D’Adamo  
Harold Palmer  
Kenneth Doyle  
Alice Flamer  
Joseph Ferrero  
Mark Poggio  
Patricia Blow  
Rita Rastelli  
Mary Dougherty  
Carol Blackmon  
Dana Della Valla  
John DiBernardo  
Susan Vacca  
John Giampietro  
Jennifer Ruggiano  
Joanne Weglicki  
Maria Pugliese  
Joyce Talota  
Michael Harmon  
Kimi Kamihira  
Judith Williams  
Bonnie O’Kane  
Jason Waterman  
Mary Flood  
Gary Irvine  
Winifred Gilmore

*(See Lifesavers on page 11)*
FJD Combined Campaign

Through the City of Philadelphia Employees’ Combined Campaign, employees contribute to 13 charitable non-profit umbrella organizations representing hundreds of charities working locally and around the world. Donations are distributed among programs that support children and youth, community health, social justice, and advocacy and social services, to name only a few.

Philadelphia has one of the nation’s most successful municipal campaigns raising even more money than some larger cities including Los Angeles and Chicago. The FJD is an integral part of that tradition.

“Providing Choice, Creating Change” was the theme for the 2006 Campaign. The city established a goal of collecting $1.4 million. The FJD portion of that goal was $74,500, and thanks to the enthusiasm and hard work of FJD volunteers and the generous support of our employees, the FJD surpassed its goal by receiving pledges totaling $76,880 from 543 donors. Special kudos go to Bench Warrant Unit Manager Bill McMonagle, for raising $24,000 over the last two campaigns.

This marks the third year that the FJD has featured an incentive program for donors. Contributors donating two dollars or more per pay were automatically enrolled in three drawings. Some of the prizes included: two tickets to a 76er’s game; a round of golf for two; overnight stays for two at the Loews Hotel, the Marriott and the Holiday Inn in Old City; gift certificates to Lord & Taylor’s and Bed, Bath & Beyond; a $100 gift certificate to the Keating River Grill at Penn’s Landing; and so much more!

Many FJD employees expressed an interest in donating to the Hurricane Relief Fund. The 2006 campaign was an excellent opportunity to support charitable organizations providing immediate and long-term resources to hurricane evacuees. Through payroll deductions, donations can be designated to support both emergency relief efforts and local organizations to ensure that our communities stay strong.

The 2006 Employees Campaign has been a great success due to the generous spirit of the FJD workforce and the commitment of the department volunteers. Thanks for helping those who are less fortunate.

Bill McMonagle, (DR) helped to collect $24,000 over 2 years

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### Anniversaries

(10/01/05—12/31/05)

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<th>Name</th>
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### Retirements

(10/01/05—12/31/05)

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Norma Monte: Civil Employee of the Year

The Common Pleas Court Trial Division-Civil Court administration arranged their schedules so that the Employee of the Year award would coincide with their usual gala celebration for the winter holidays. The party featured great food, and a lot of it. As usual, the gathering in Conversation Hall was very well attended. As the highlight of this year’s celebration, Norma Monte of the Quality Assurance Unit was presented with her impressive award as the Trial Division-Civil Employee of the Year. Norma is known as a person who is very knowledgeable about automated Civil systems and who is quick to help others by utilizing that knowledge. She is also a very pleasant person, and an excellent trainer.

YVRP Continued

(Continued from page 1)

(Mimi) Prioleau was conducting a staff meeting. Present were representatives from most of the units that fall under the umbrella of Community-Based West. (Ed. Note: Look for more about community-based services in upcoming articles) The agenda included such items as case Management guidelines, scheduling PO appearances at Treatment Court hearings, forms to be filed, scheduling home visits, PO involvement in certification hearings, a presentation by a service provider, and a brief acknowledgement of the POs who had birthdays that month.

The visit was occasioned by many articles that have touted YVRP as one of the rare, truly successful efforts at stemming the violence on our streets. And in that sense, it works. In another sense, YVRP and the other services administered through CBW and its North Philadelphia counterpart, Community-Based North (CBN) also work, and work very hard indeed at what they do to live up to their motto to keep Philadelphia’s youth “Alive at 25.”

(Continued on page 6)
YVRP Continued

(Continued from page 5)

The program’s goal is to work with young people who are at risk of killing or being killed on the streets of Philadelphia.

The POs succeed for several reasons. First, they are young, energetic, smart, and dedicated. Second, they are well organized. Third, because of their location, they are available to the kids and young adults with whom they work, and last, they partner with the Police, the schools, the Department of Human Services (DHS) and most importantly with their “Youth Partners.” The “P” in YVRP stands for partnership and the kids they work with are known as “Youth Partners.” Not delinquents, not defendants, not bad guys, but Youth Partners. And it is the success of the Youth Partners that matters most.

The program began on June 1, 1999 in the 24th and 25th Police Districts in North Philadelphia. YVRP is organized according to Police Districts because the Police are integral partners with the POs and the Youth Partners in the effort – not to arrest kids after the fact, but more to prevent the violence from happening in the first place and to improve community relations. YVRP was later expanded to the 12th and 19th Police Districts in West Philadelphia. It may continue in its expansion to the 22nd Police District in the near future.

The Police and POs also partner with street workers from the Philadelphia Anti-Crime, Anti-Violence Network (PAAN). Add to the mix by including representatives from the schools, the District Attorney’s Office, and others, and a considerable amount of time and energy are dedicated to this violence prevention network. It makes sense. It was a smart move to finally organize and coordinate all the players who have for years been traditionally involved in the effort to stop kids from becoming further involved with crime; and at a minimum, to keep them alive.

And boy are they coordinated. Each week, one of the POS must make a presentation at the Operations Committee (OPSCom) meetings at which all the institutional partners (Police Community Relations, DHS Supervisors, PAAN Workers, etc.) are present. Probation caseloads are reviewed for progress. The meetings can be somewhat nerve-wracking. During the presentations, parties can question why particular actions were taken, or why they weren’t, and the PO/Street Worker Teams must make a good accounting of their reasons.

The OpsCom meetings happen every Tuesday. The YVRP Management meetings occur once a month, and the YVRP Steering Committee meets every other month. The effort is data-driven. Statistics must back up the claims and they should add up to success.

As to the real work, the POS not only work hard, but also work at all times of day. They must have at least 10 contacts with each of the Youth Partners every month. They go on “Targeted Patrols” with two Police Officers until they have

Pamela Jones-Mundy, Electronic Monitoring

Community-Based West Managers (l-r) Yvette Daniels, Assistant Supervisor Community-Based Probation West; Tina Marie Coley, Supervisor YVRP/Community-Based Probation West; Miriam (MiMi) Prioleau Lead Supervisor Community-Based West.

(Continued on page 7)
completed four “successful” visits by seeing and talking with the youths in their homes or hang-outs between the hours of 4 PM and 12 Midnight. They must also record two successful home visits during traditional work hours, another two in the office, and two “others” contacts which could occur anywhere else (in court, on the street, etc.) These must all be documented in very specific ways. The POs make arrangements for job training, for schooling and GED classes, and many other programs to steer kids toward positive outlets for their energies. They talk to the Youth Partners. Perhaps just as importantly, they listen to them too. The POs are social workers, advocates, counselors, listeners, and law enforcement officers. In short, they have to take caseloads of up to 20 young people who are up to 25 years of age, meet with them in various places at all times of the day and night, and try to prevent them from becoming any more involved with crime and violence. Beyond that, the POS and others try to steer their Youth Partners toward activities that will benefit them, their families and their neighborhoods; our neighborhoods.

Some of the POs with experience comment on the differences between the geography and caseloads covered by the North Philadelphia and West Philadelphia Community-Based Probation Programs. One area may be somewhat more gang oriented while the other seems to have small pockets of kids acting independently without a gang hierarchy. They describe life on the “street.” The street is the area outside the front door where parents and laws no longer rule; where teens and pre-teens are subjected to the influences of people who have their own very negative interests at heart. They talk about the organized drug dealers who try to take our young people under their wing and fill their needs: someone to talk to, someone who appears to really care about them, but in the end, someone who only uses them to further illegal gains and trains them to utilize violence to protect an illicit business.

The negative influences are well-organized and determined.

The POs understand that they and their partners must also be organized, truly committed, and tireless in their efforts.

According to the reports and experts, the murder rate for this most susceptible group of young people is down. The incidence of violence for youth partners between the ages of 14 and 25 is down. This community-based approach works: the court in the community; not downtown. School-based probation works. YVRP works. And, according to what I’ve seen, these FJD employees work – they work very hard. And they deserve our thanks and respect for doing so.

Editor’s Note: This story focuses on YVRP Juvenile Probation Officers in West Philadelphia. Recent successes in the area of youth violence prevention utilize the concept of community-based probation and court services. Upcoming articles will provide more insights into the community-based probation services and the FJD people who provide them including the Adult Probation Department. The YVRP Partners include juvenile probation, adult probation, Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network, the Philadelphia Police Department, Philadelphia Safe and Sound, the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office, the Philadelphia Department of Human Services, the Philadelphia Housing Police, Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia’s Coordinating Office of Drug and Alcohol Abuse Programs and the Philadelphia School District. Some personnel could not appear for photos: Christine Gibsion, Supervisor YVRP CBN; Michael McPeake, YVRP/CBN; POs Michelle Reibel, CB; Timothy Farley, YVRP/CBN; James Marino, YVRP/CBN.
You Can Make a Difference in the Life of a Child

The Philadelphia READS program engages volunteer coaches (court employees) who provide encouragement, support, and instruction in reading to children from grades 1-3 in the Philadelphia Public Schools. There are two groups performing this great service. One meets at room 380 in City Hall on Wednesdays at noon, and the other coaches meet with their students every Tuesday from 11:45 AM – 12:45 PM in the CJC 12th floor judicial lunchroom. The photos here were taken at a CJC READS meeting.

City Hall READS Volunteers
(Photos of the City Hall READS group were featured in the last issue)
Barbara Cermele
Marlesa Newsome-Bryant
Jacqueline Courtney
Margaret Donapel
Jackie Baione
Chris Evans
Anna Marie Gibson
Winifred Gilmore
Linda Griffin
Donna Glynn
Jacqueline Mansfield
Norma McNeil
Kathleen Paris
Denise White
Patricia Moore-Grant
Carla Oshea
Laura Paone
Vickie Pardo
Claudia Streets
Lee Swiacki
Desiree Vincent
Tiffany Washington
Esther Dalturis
Denia White
Angie Williams
Helen Hare
Linda Williams

CJC READS Volunteers
Sheryl Stepner
Mary Politano
Nicole Coppola
Matthew Market
Ed Bazemore
Greg Caldwell
Michelle Montano
Chris Grasso
Laverne King
Aliya Hassel
Lorraine Moore
Jason Munroe
Joyce Ferrero
Lutfiyah Al-Amin
Laura Lombardo
Joyce Murphy
Carey Widman
Kelly Hammer
Franzella Parsons
Darece Williford
Jacquelyn Carlton
Mary Ann Glackin
Alicia Gibbs
Lois Stanford
The Philadelphia READS employee volunteer coaches deserve our congratulations for making a difference in the lives of MANY Philadelphia schoolchildren.
Adult Probation Trains Together

In anticipation of its changeover to a computerized caseload management system, the entire Adult Probation-Parole Department participated in a training session on January 12th and 13th. The session was designed to provide the entire staff with an overview of the Probation Case Management System program, “PCMS-Monitor”, and the resulting changes in procedural and business practices involving caseload management and record-keeping. Held at the Philadelphia Bar Institute Conference Center, employees received much more from this training session than anticipated.

Prior to attending this training, numerous employees had expressed the sentiment that it would be a long, boring day, filled with one lecture after another. The day began with a delicious continental breakfast. Employees were then greeted by Administrative Judge Fitzgerald, Deputy Court Administrator Dave Lawrence, who represented Court Administrator Joseph Cairone and David Wasson, Deputy Court Administrator of the Trial Division. Opening remarks concluded with Co-Chief Probation Officer Frank Snyder, and Rob Schwah, president of LORYX, designers of Monitor. Developed and presented by Ed Quinn and Kathleen Intenzo, the training began with an amusing historical perspective on the various methods the APPD has utilized to collect and maintain caseload data. An original and extremely funny video depicting the Probation Officer’s fight to maintain control over numerous and cumbersome record-keeping and data collection procedures was presented. Acted by PO Todd Schwartz and Ed Quinn, and filmed and directed by PO Michael Pancoast, this video set the tone for a day that was filled with information presented in an engaging and fun manner. The day also presented a rare opportunity for Probation Department employees to come together in one location, interacting with co-workers they don’t often get to see. Administrative Judge Fitzgerald stated in his remarks that this type of gathering should become a yearly event for the Adult Probation Parole Department. We look forward to it.

Top (l-r): Eleanor Moore and John D’Amico. Left (l-r): PO Tanisha Staggs, Support Staff Bernadette Penn, Support Staff James Owens.

Above (l-r): Mike Pancoast and Todd Schwartz. Mike produced and directed the training video, Todd acted in it. Left (l-r): Donna Bullock, Rebecca Butler; Stacy Thomas.
Not Cut Out for a Life of Crime: Three men who police say stole a car in San Jose, Calif., in October and drove it to Chico, Calif., were arrested in Chico when police caught them trying to break into that same car because they had locked the keys inside (or thought they had, since Chico Officer Jose Lara said he found the keys in one of the men's pockets, after all). [Chico Enterprise-Record, 11-4-05] [The Buffalo News, 1-13-06]

Least Competent Criminals

Colleen McGrath
Gurnell Williams
Kelly Hammer
Ralph Silvestri
Nyckolaus Wellem
Rebecca Kline
Louise Carpino
Cynthia Giacobetti
Darlene Miller
Michael Lanzalotti
Robert Busillo
Anthony Erace
Kate Somerville
Anthony Sasselli
James Owens
Mathew Market
Yolanda McFadden
Sharon Pressley
Shaun Brown
Dominic Richetti
Frank DeFrancesco
Joseph Nocella
Gladys Cruz Velazquez
Danielle Alexander
Juanita Copeland

Lifesaver Volunteers

(Lifesavers Continued from page 3)

New Courtroom Quotes

Lawyer: "What happened then?"
Witness: "He told me, he says, 'I have to kill you because you can identify me.'"
Lawyer: "Did he kill you?"
Witness: "No.

Lawyer: "Now sir, I'm sure you are an intelligent and honest man--"
Witness: "Thank you. If I weren't under oath, I'd return the compliment."

Lawyer: "Do you have any children or anything of that kind?"

Lawyer: "You were there until the time you left, is that true?"

Lawyer: "Doctor, did you say he was shot in the woods?"
Witness: "No, I said he was shot in the lumbar region."

Lawyer: "So you were gone until you returned?"

Lawyer: "What is your marital status?"
Witness: "Fair."

Lawyer: "Were you alone or by yourself?"

Lawyer: "Were you present in court this morning when you were sworn in?"