

SPRING 2023

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

# FAMILY MATTERS



## CAPTURING THE CPP

Are you unsure what Community Placement Programs (CPP) are or how placement works? In this spring edition of the Family Matters newsletter, we will take a deep dive into all things related to CPP. Continue reading and you'll discover the advantages of CPP, where to find your local CPP, the process of placement, as well as services that could be offered to your child.

First, let's meet a few members of our team and what skills they bring to our CPP.

“

No matter how difficult the challenge is, always stay positive and believe in yourself.”



### BAJCC SCHOOL CALENDAR

**Spring Break:** April 3 – 7

**Last Day of School:** June 13

**Graduation:** June 16

**KEEP READING TO LEARN MORE ON HOW TO CONNECT WITH YOUR LOCAL CPP!**



# OUR TEAM

Joan Gomes has been the Merrimac CPP case manager for eight years now. Joan, who was the first CPP case manager at the facility, loves everything about her job. She works with intelligent and supportive staff who are fair and compassionate. She enjoys working with the parole officers, Behavioral Service Unit, and a therapist from Williamsburg behavioral health, all of whom compose the team for supporting youth. Joan is the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) facilitator, which is her favorite part of the job. She truly believes we should show each youth how to do something, not just tell them to do it. She also supports giving youth the skills they need to make a difference in their behavior while watching for “the light to go on” in them, indicating the start of change. She feels her strength is that she genuinely cares, and that the youth respond to her. She likes to guide them through problem solving and effectively communicating. Joan has applied for her LCSW and believes it will help her to contribute more to the CPP and the success with the youth. She follows the mantra, “Before I do or say something, I ask myself is this how I would want someone to speak to me or treat me. We should treat others the way we hope to be treated and make decisions that benefit all.”

## MEET JOAN GOMES CPP CASE MANAGER



## CORTEZ SMITH RECREATION SPECIALIST

Cortez Smith, recreation specialist at Bon Air Juvenile Correctional Center, has had an extensive career. Before joining Virginia DJJ, he worked at The Ohio State University, Stockton University in New Jersey, Culpeper JCC in Virginia and Virginia Tech before joining the Bon Air family. Apart from Virginia Tech, his work was always in athletics. Through his career, Cortez enjoyed training youth, building teams and competitions. He said he always enjoyed seeing the difference in the kids and the way they interacted in more positive ways. In his current position, he puts his efforts into getting creative with in-house athletic activities. Sports are a great tool in reaching the youth, allowing kids to be kids while building a foundation for teamwork. His favorite part of the job is engaging youth in a particular recreational activity, working with youth and staff on a team relationship in a structured environment. He feels that teaching the rules of organized sports, showing the youth how those rules make it fair to everyone, and watching them come around to understanding those concepts is the basis of athletics. Cortez emphasizes never belittling the players and tries to teach them to build up and support each other. He said one of his favorite motivational statements is, “No matter how difficult the challenge is, always stay positive and believe in yourself.”





# SUCCESS STORY



**STEPHEN KOMLO**  
COUNSELOR



Central Region Reentry Advocate Rowena Callis shared a recent success story of a resident in the Rappahannock CPP who, with the help of Counselor Stephen Komlo, enrolled in Germanna Community College, and completed his associate's degree in business administration. The youth stated that once he earned his GED, Programs Manager Pamela Jeffries gave him information on college courses. The most difficult part was the virtual classes, with no instructor immediately available to assist him. Being able to learn at his own pace and with no distractions were a plus.

The resident considers himself exceptional with time management, and felt he had the ability to complete the work toward his goal. He stated the most challenging class was Quantum Reasoning and Statistics. He was on the Dean's List, and graduated Cum Laude with a 3.45 GPA, and a 4.0 on his final. His goal is to continue his education and earn a bachelor's degree. This youth has also earned every certificate offered at Rappahannock and tutored another student on his GED studies. He is currently enrolled in warehouse management through Germanna's workforce center and hopes to start his own trucking company. Staff at Rappahannock stated that this resident is goal oriented, determined and motivated, with impressive communication skills

Another success story comes from a youth at Merrimac CPP who will be completing her associate's degree at Tidewater Community College this May with a degree in human services. She has completed both semesters of her internship requirements at Merrimac working with Joan Gomes and Jaye Stanley as her supervisors/mentors. She is in her second semester studying human services at Old Dominion University, where she's taking a full course load and has been named to the President's List for her academic achievements and was recently inducted into the National Society for Collegiate Scholars and the National Society for Leadership and Success.

She has written one book of urban fiction, which was published and made available for purchase on Amazon. Her second book is in final review before self-publication. She completed two murals on display at Merrimac JDC, with plans for more. She has always had a talent for drawing and is excited to contribute to Merrimac with her permanent art installments. She has worked extremely hard to prove to herself that she is a capable and competent young woman. She has taken full advantage of the opportunities provided for her at Merrimac CPP to excel not only academically, but also with her mental health and positive coping skills, developing better interpersonal relationships, addressing trauma, and goal setting.

# LET'S EXPLORE

# → CPP

## COMMUNITY PLACEMENT PROGRAMS

*We're Transforming Challenges into Success!*

### WHAT?



A placement option for youth committed to DJJ across the Commonwealth. Over the last several years, DJJ has developed a continuum of services for committed youth to address public safety, the criminogenic needs of our youth and to hold juveniles accountable for their actions. A Community Placement Program is an option within that continuum. DJJ partners with local juvenile detention centers strategically placed across the Commonwealth to place youth close to their home communities and stay connected with family/natural supports.

### WHERE?



Currently, DJJ has seven participating juvenile detention centers, regionally located throughout the state:

- Prince William
- Rappahannock
- Blue Ridge
- Shenandoah
- Virginia Beach
- Merrimac
- Chesterfield

## HOW?



CPPs serve juveniles between the ages of 13 and 20 who have received either indeterminate or determinate commitments to the Department of Juvenile Justice. Youth can be considered for placement at commitment to DJJ. Once committed, the youth undergo an assessment/evaluation process that determines how best to address education, mental health and treatment needs. Youth can also be considered for placement in a CPP as a step down from Bon Air JCC to focus on reentry efforts.

## WHAT?



This list of services is by no means all-inclusive of what the CPPs have to offer youth who are accepted into the program:

- Education – High school diploma or GED
- Vocational opportunities – College classes, on-line certifications (see the post-secondary offerings specific to each facility on the following page).
- Employability skills
- Anger management
- Substance abuse treatment
- Life, social and thinking skills
- Decision-making and problem solving
- Individual counseling
- Family counseling

Families are encouraged to participate in treatment teams, family counseling and special family engagement events held by the CPP. Residents maintain connections with their families via letter writing, video and/or in-person visitation, and are afforded regular phone calls during the week and weekends. Successful community reintegration is “key” and involves a collaborative effort between the resident and family, the parole officer, treatment providers, JDC program staff, Central Admissions and Placement (CAP) counselor and the Re-Entry Advocate. Assessments and evaluations of youth needs along with service and reentry planning starts as soon as a youth is committed and continues throughout their placement in the CPP. This is vital in transforming the challenges experienced by residents into a successful transition back into the community.

# POST-SECONDARY CPP OPPORTUNITIES

Blue Ridge CCP	Chesterfield CPP	Merrimac CPP
Piedmont Valley Community College	Brightpoint Community College	Old Dominion University
Charlottesville-Albemarle Technical Education Center (CATEC)	OSHA Certifications	Tidewater Community College
Design Electric, Inc.	ServSafe	Virginia Peninsula Community College
OSHA Certifications	National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)	Tidewater Community College - WorkForce Development
Virtual Job Shadow	Coursera	Tooling U
Driving Simulator	Virtual Job Shadow	OSHA Certifications
	Driving Simulator	ServSafe
	Everfi	CPR/First Aid/AED
		Coursera - Spanish
		Virginia Peninsula Community College

Additional opportunities may be available at your CPP. Please contact your child's Probation Officer for more information and details on the post-secondary opportunities available to your child.



Prince William CPP	Rappahannock CPP	Shenandoah Valley CPP	Virginia Beach CPP
Ashworth College	Germanna Community College	Blue Ridge Community College	Old Dominion University
Northern Virginia Community College	Germanna Community College Workforce Development (on-line and in person trades programs)	OSHA Certifications through CareerSafe	Tidewater Community College
OSHA Certifications through CareerSafe	Nutrition Wellness/ Culinary Program	CareerSafe	Barbering
CareerSafe	RFK Solutionz	ServSafe	OSHA
ServSafe	OSHA Certifications through CareerSafe	National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)	ServSafe
CPR/First Aid/AED	CareerSafe	Virtual Job Shadow	Cyber Security
Virtual Job Shadow	ServSafe	Driving Simulator	CPR/First Aid/AED
Casey Life Skills	CPR/First Aid/AED	Hydroponics/Culinary Arts	Life Build JUMP

Additional opportunities may be available at your CPP. Please contact your child's Probations Officer for more information and details on the post-secondary opportunities available to your child.