



# NEWS

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Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

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## VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE'S TRANSFORMATION EFFORT RECEIVES VCU'S 2020 L. DOUGLAS WILDER INNOVATION IN GOVERNMENT AWARD

**Richmond, VA, Jan. 30** – Positive outcomes for Virginia's court-involved youth as a result of its transformation plan has earned the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice the 2020 Innovation in Government Award from the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University.

"[DJJ's] Transformation Plan touched virtually every aspect of the agency's operation," judges noted in bestowing the award. "Now nearly five years since its inception, DJJ's Transformation Plan has yielded dramatic gains that have resulted in positive outcomes for the youth and families including an increased number of successful diversion and probation cases, a broader continuum of services available across the Commonwealth, a reduction in the number of youth incarcerated in state correctional centers, increased attainment in treatment and educational goals including high school graduation rates."

"This recognition is the result of the great work that our dedicated employees, colleagues and partners have done over the past few years to introduce new practices, programs and services to court-involved youth and their families," said DJJ Director Valerie Boykin. "While we understand that there is still much work to do, I believe all can take justifiable pride in what they have accomplished up to now. This high honor belongs to everyone."

"DJJ's transformation that began with the vision of former Director Andy Block and has continued seamlessly under Director Boykin is changing young lives for the better,"

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## DJJ Earns 2020 L. Douglas Wilder Innovation In Government Award

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said Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran. “This recognition is well deserved and I am proud of DJJ’s impactful work.”

Based on the results of a comprehensive system assessment by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, in 2014 DJJ began planning for a comprehensive transformation of the juvenile justice system. Since implementation began in 2016, DJJ has safely reduced the number of youth placed in state custody, reformed correctional practices to focus on more rigorous treatment and education. DJJ has also closed two juvenile correctional centers and reinvested the savings into building a statewide continuum of community-based services and supports.

The L. Douglas Wilder Award recognizes innovative work that results in increased efficiency, effectiveness, or other improvements that affect how a government entity delivers its services to constituents. The awardee’s work must “introduce a unique and fundamental change in governance, policy, problem-solving, technology or other operational element.”

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