



WHAT'S WORKING

A Message from
DJJ Director Andy Block

Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice

September 29, 2017

It Was A Family Day For Us, Too



DJJ Staff From Across Commonwealth Work As Team On Common Goal

The positive vibes generated by our hugely successful Bon Air Family Day on Aug. 27 are still reverberating throughout our agency and among the residents and their families who attended. It is important to acknowledge that this day would not have happened except for the hard work of all of you who have done so much for the last three years to get us to this moment, and who, in many cases, gave up their Sundays, or came in to work overtime, to make the day successful.

The Bon Air team was out in force, with smiles on their faces, doing all they could to make sure everyone had fun and stayed safe. We also had more than 100 volunteers from our Court Service Units as far away as Abingdon, Central Office, and our Education team, who also came to Bon Air to lend a hand.

From the moment Family Day was announced about five weeks earlier, DJJ parole officers made every effort to ensure every youth on their caseload would receive a visit. Staff in the communities were asked not only to gather families together and arrange transportation for visits, but to volunteer their time to assist our Bon Air colleagues with event setup. We had volunteers from as close by as



Richmond, Chesterfield and Henrico and as far away as Hampton, Virginia Beach, Roanoke and even Bristol.

The day represented not only an opportunity to celebrate families, but it was also a day where DJJ community, central office and facility staff could celebrate a successful day of teamwork.

I suspect that this was the largest gathering of staff from across the various divisions in years, if not ever, and was certainly the largest gathering of our staff at an event where we were serving families and youth. Your time and effort were reminders of how lucky we are to have you, and how your work is as much about heart as it is about a paycheck.

Our partners also attended in large numbers: Chesterfield County Sheriff Department, Hanover County Sheriff Department, and Richmond Police Department, Virginia State Police and the Forest View Volunteer Rescue Squad attended with information tables and were available to help those present learn more about their work with their communities. And our friends at the Annie E. Casey Foundation helped provide food for the families as well as coolers for them to use when they travel on buses to and from future visitation days.

“Family Day” was an appropriate name for the event – but not only because our residents’ families could enjoy the day. Watching the sea of blue-shirted staff from across the agency smiling and laughing, and working together, also made it clear to me that we at DJJ are a family, too – one whose members have worked side-by-side through some very challenging times, and continue to show that they can achieve extraordinary things when they work as a team.

NUMBERS

DJJ Staff/Volunteer Participation

- ❖ Court Service Units – 10
- ❖ Central Office and CSU Staff – 40
- ❖ Education Unit staff – 60
- ❖ Bon Air Security staff – 24
- ❖ Bon Air Residential staff – 126
- ❖ Bon Air Non-Residential staff – 40+
- ❖ Bon Air Volunteers – 6

Resident and Family Participation

- ❖ Family members – 325
- ❖ Residents – 136
- ❖ Family members doing regular visit – 71
- ❖ Residents receiving regular visit – 28

Partners, Vendors and Sponsors

- ❖ Annie E. Casey Foundation
- ❖ Assisting Families of Inmates
- ❖ Chesterfield County Sheriff’s Office
- ❖ City of Richmond Police Department
- ❖ Department of Corrections K-9 Unit
- ❖ Forest View Volunteer Rescue Squad
- ❖ Hanover County Sheriff’s Office
- ❖ James River Transportation
- ❖ VanGo Transportation
- ❖ Virginia State Police
- ❖ VERA Institute of Justice

